This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

YC 48263

Digitized by Google

William Swinburne
Church Street
Workington

THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

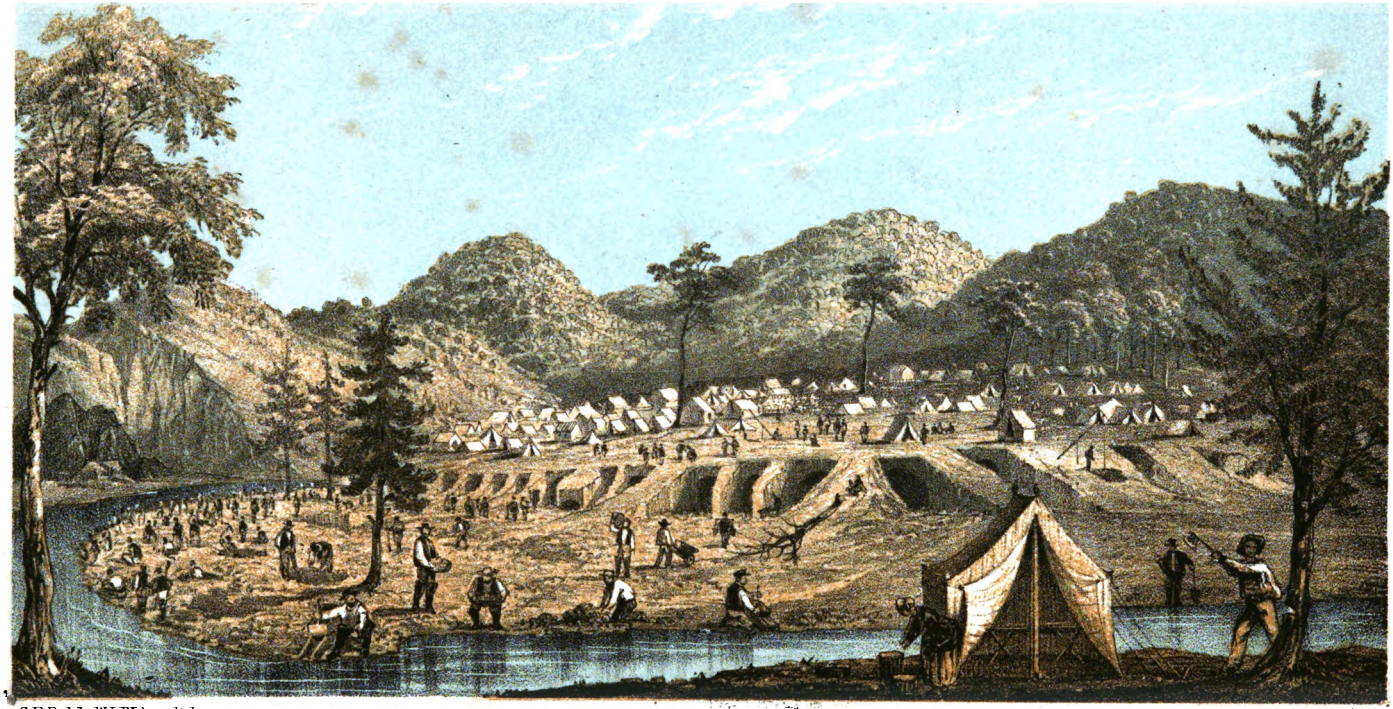
PRESENTED BY
PROF. CHARLES A. KOFOID AND
MRS. PRUDENCE W. KOFOID

Digitized by Google

4/89

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google



C R R. del W. L. Walton lith

Hullmandel & Walton Lithog

SHEEP STATION POINT. RIVER TURON.

Digitized by Google

WHAT I HEARD, SAW, AND DID

AT THE

AUSTRALIAN GOLD FIELDS.

BY

C. RUDSTON READ,

LATE CROWN LAND COMMISSIONER, ASSISTANT AT MOUNT ALEXANDER,
AND TERRITORIAL MAGISTRATE FOR THE COLONY OF VICTORIA.

A TURON WIDOW.

Good bye, my love, good bye,
My Cradle's on the dray,
To rock out Gold for thee, love;
To the Turon I must away.

LONDON:
T. & W. BOONE, 29, NEW BOND STREET.
1853.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

DU103
R4

PREFACE.

I AM induced to publish "What I Heard, Saw, and Did," whilst practically engaged as a digger, and during my official term of residence at the Australian Gold-fields, for the following reasons. First, the desire to convey correct information on many points of interest; secondly, to offer what I consider useful advice with regard to the inconsiderate emigration, the tide of which is now flowing with so much force towards the Australian shores.

"What I Heard," I simply relate, neither affirming or discrediting the accuracy of the stories, I simply tell them as they were told to me; for "what I Saw, and Did," I am of course responsible.

Now, with regard to emigration. I have no party to serve, no interest to advocate; but no man acquainted with the facts of the case, no mind desirous to consider these facts impartially, can resist the conviction of the disappointment, the ruin, which must necessarily follow the present reckless course which multitudes, in the hope of individual benefit, are pursuing. It must be obvious, that in the early colonization of any land, skilled labour, and capital, are far more required than those abilities which are

M313852

Digitized by Google

necessarily developed by the wants of a wealthy nation, and the demands of commercial enterprise. Thus, carpenters, bricklayers, husbandmen, men practically acquainted with the useful arts, and agriculture, or men capable of rough manual labour, emigrate with advantage to themselves, and become the strength, combined with the employment of capital, of the rising colony. But to those whose previous career has not placed these resources at their disposal, or who are not suited to the hard necessity of their new position, my advice is, "remain where you are."

The following pages will, I think, illustrate the accuracy of these opinions.

I do not found these remarks upon the opinions of others, but upon personal experience, and as the information which my pages contain presents Australia and the Gold Fields to the reader, practically as the country is, and the emigrant's prospects are in relation to its social and industrial condition, and that to the latest date, he will be thus himself enabled to determine the correctness of my opinion upon the subject.

ERRATA.

Page 5, line 3 from bottom, *for* "Victoria" *read* "Blue Mountains."
Page 8, line 10 from top, *for* "with" *read* "therefore excepting."

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Page.

SHOPS in Sydney—Fresh arrivals from diggings—Leave by mail for Bathurst—Upset of the mail—Road to the diggings—An amusing American—Leave Bathurst for the Turon—Family arrival and bivouac—Bed companions in the bush—Society at a bush public—Suspicious looking travellers—Colonial chaff—A funny sign—Increase of my gold fever—Process of washing gold—Gold buyer's tricks—Tent furniture—Sociable diggers 1

CHAPTER II.

Doing the Commissioners—Questions for intending emigrants—Can they stand the work—Commence digging—Sheep Station Point—Bars of rivers—Mr. Williams's claim—Average of lucky and unlucky diggers—Maitland men as diggers—Trapping thieves—An artful dodger—Diggers' conversation—A lucky hole—Washing tailings—Quartz veins 20

CHAPTER III.

Snake stone—Sudden rise of rivers—Assistant Commissioners—Bishop of Sydney—Sunday at the diggings—Females—Sickness—Publicans—New diggings—Attacked with sandy blight—Return to Sydney—Getting a start in the Colony—Mr. Newchum—Newchum's follies—Offers himself as clerk—Accepts a shepherd's situation—Description of the road—Jack Rattle—Jack's conscience—Arrest of a gent for horse stealing—Newchum's narrow escape—His prophecy—Curious coincidence—A friend in need is a friend indeed—Newchum in love—The Prophecy verified—Once more in a good bed—A sailor's answer—A bully finding his match—Sailor larning him manners—Playing a trick on my friends 36

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

Page.

Shipping offices—Government House—A small craft's steward—Steward's gammon—Mr. O'Phlacemall—Mr. Rumkhove—Mr. O'P. a bit of a sailor—A rowdy—Embark on board the Venturesome—Squaretoe's cure for the stomach ache—His greasiness the cook—A canny Scot—The vessel ashore—Mr. O'P. satisfied—Arrive in Hobson's bay—Melbourne Argus—The police force 68

CHAPTER V.

Three nights' lodging—Nine sleeping in one room—Charges on wharfs—Pigeons of Mr. Moshesh—Humberellers—Reckless squandering of money—a lovely intended—Her lover—The bride a quadruped—Diggers' weddings—Rt. Hon. Sidney Herbert's plan of emigration—Expressions of gratitude—A good example—Reverses of fortune—Promoters of female Emigration—Ludicrous subject—Colonial Humbugs—Folly of some parties emigrating—Good and bad subjects—Excellence of Mr. S. Herbert's plan—A young gentleman "digger"—Bush rangers—Considerations for fathers—People brought up to be colonists—One of the deluded—A Manchester man at fault . . . 87

CHAPTER VI.

Prisoners and police—Police infallible—Country lodgings—Robbery on board the Nelson—Bad accounts from the diggings—Appointment as Commissioner—Thrown from my horse—Bad state of the roads—Arrive at Cairnhill—Enter the Black Forest—Meet a "moral" postman—His ideas of a Commissioner's duty—How to tip the scales—Blinding the traps—Postman's opinion of officials—A swellish cove—Unintelligible language—Five Mile Creek—Carlshrue—The swell—Mr. Swyndel-Dhygga—Gold buyer—Swell converted into a Count—Mr. Cheatemall—Blazes, the waiter—Arrival at Commissioners' camp—Captain Blamire—Officers of Gold Commission—Salaries 114

CHAPTER VII.

Trigonometrical survey—Penalties for unlicensed diggers—Police reward fund—Skyhacking—Candle light gold—Assistant Commissioner's duties—Out stations—Chief Commissioner—Mr. F. Jones—Egotists—Myers's Creek Station—Samuel Kingdon, Esq.—A piece of cannibalism—Peg Leg Gully—Civility of diggers—Value of an inch of ground—Different depths gold found at—A lucky digger—Enormous price of flour—One of the genii—His opinion of the Lieut.-Governor—Captain

Digitized by Google

Page.

Hombog—A nice little income—A Yankee's cool reply—A nice young man—The Count again—Something hard—Blow my skull off—Humanity of a Yankee skipper—A man shot—So much for sympathy—A 'gentleman' (?) surgeon—Wretched state of a sick gentleman—Some more humbug—Pot-house eloquence—A distressing accident—Good conduct of British sailors—Their rewards 144

CHAPTER VIII.

Horse stealing—Sandy—A knowing trick—English and Scotch *versus* Irish—A cold hearted brother—The Peg Leg army—A Yorkshireman—Germans and Hungarians—Fortunate and unfortunate diggers—Puddling—The White Hills—Tremendous hard work—Quartz crushing companies—Commission of inquiry—Manner of washing gold in Brazil—Plan in Siberia—Mr. Hopkins—Sir R. Murchison—Mr. E. H. Hargraves—Discovery of gold in Victoria—Mount Korong—An ill wind that blows nobody good—White Horse Hill—The Ovens diggings—Australian Alps—Mr. J. M. Clow—Discovery of leviathan nuggets—New regulations in N. S. Wales—Employing fresh arrivals—Tricks at registry offices—Another change—House building companies—A strange story 183

CHAPTER IX.

Christmas at Bendigo—The climate—Agreeable tent companions—Mr. Tolmer—Railway navvies—Mount Alexander railway—Railways to Geelong and William's Town—Railway via Kilmore—Geelong to Ballarat—An imaginary widow—Wool and cattle traffic—Government would forward mails—Coal—Seeing is believing—Boats well employed—Seamen—William's Town dock or quay—Great want of a Water Company—Nuisances in Melbourne—Gas—Barracouta—Fish in Sydney—The Great Britain—Entertainment on board—Tahiti and Tôga-Tabu—New Zealand route—Necessity for schools—Whether for a permanency 217

CHAPTER X.

The natives—Natives of Tasmania extinct—New Zealand "similes"—The Earl of Derby—The protectorate plan—An amusing native—Messrs. Langhorne and Bonney—Mr. Moorhouse's report—Results—Arrival of the 40th regt.—The British soldier—The British sailor—Capt. J. B. Godfrey—Extract from Argus—The stranger's letter—His afflicting situation—Houseless emigrant's home—Finding a Samaritan—People who should read the letter—Real friends . . 246

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

Page.

Early knowledge of Australia—Captain Cook—Possession Island—First expedition—M. de la Perouse—Sydney Cove—Bounty Bligh—John McArthur, Esq.—Revolt—Governor Macquarie—Sir Thomas Brisbane—Australian agricultural company—Sir Ralph Darling—Captain Sturt—Sir Ralph's alleged cruelty—Sir Richard Bourke—"Advance Victoria"—Curious circumstance—A cunning blacksmith—C. J. La Trobe, Esq.—Geelong—Lieutenant Governor of Victoria—The Gold—Estimated produce—Canadian Gully—Social condition—Advice of newspapers to emigrants—Moral condition—Report of W. Westgarth, Esq.—Enormous produce of 1852—Imports, exports, and population—Summary—Revenue and expenditure—New tariff—Port dues—Imports and exports—Description of Articles—Increase of wool—General summary—With regard to California—Population—According to Mr. Khull—Commerce with the United States—The river Murray—The first steamer launched—Sir H. Young—Commission of enquiry—Report—Port Elliott—Traffic on Murray—Annual increase of stock—Cost of traffic per cwt.—Flax and gypsum—Concluding observations—Emigrants—What they should consider—Parents and Guardians—Good chance for small capitalists—Female Emigrants—The end . 267

LIST OF PLATES.

Sheep Station Point . . . . . *Frontispiece*
A Turon Widow . . . . . *Title page*
Thompson's Point 32
Shipping Office 69
Coffee, alias sly grog tent 84
Bushrangers 109
Mr. Swyndel-Dhygga 136
Chief Commissioner's Camp 140
Forest Creek 143
Author's Camp, Myers's Creek 155
Puddling 194
Junction of Peg Leg and Sailor's Gully 205
Monument to La Perouse 273
The End—The Unfortunate Digger 327
Map of the Gold Bearing Region near Mount Alexander, by John Arrowsmith, from a Trigonometrical Survey . *At the end.*

Digitized by Google

LIFE AT THE DIGGINGS,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

SHOPS IN SYDNEY—FRESH ARRIVALS FROM DIGGINGS—LEAVE BY MAIL FOR BATHURST—UPSET OF THE MAIL—ROAD TO THE DIGGINGS—AN AMUSING AMERICAN—LEAVE BATHURST FOR THE TURON—FAMILY ARRIVAL AND BIVOUAC—BED COMPANIONS IN THE BUSH—SOCIETY AT A BUSH PUBLIC—SUSPICIOUS LOOKING TRAVELLERS—COLONIAL CHAFF—A FUNNY SIGN—INCREASE OF MY GOLD FEVER—PROCESS OF WASHING GOLD—GOLD BUYER'S TRICKS—TENT FURNITURE—SOCIABLE DIGGERS.

ARRIVING at Newcastle (New South Wales), Sept. 1851, in the brig "Halcyon," from New Zealand, and hearing such glowing reports of the Gold discoveries at Ophir and on the Turon, I was induced to abandon for a time the original object I had in view (viz., paying a visit to an old friend and brother officer, in Melbourne), and leave the vessel there, in order to proceed with all haste to Sydney and the DIGGINGS; and accordingly took a passage in the steamer on the following day. During the thirteen years that had elapsed since my previous visit, the city of Sydney had, as may be supposed, increased enormously; on all sides of the harbour magnificent houses were built, or building, but their progress was checked for the time by

Digitized by Google

want of labour, every one, gentle or simple, being "*off for the diggings.*" The harbour was also crowded with shipping, perhaps rather too much so, for sailors, partaking of the enthusiasm, were with difficulty to be had for any wages.

The excitement that prevailed in the town on the auriferous deposits being first announced, had rather subsided when I landed, but notwithstanding every person seemed on the "*qui vive.*" Gold appeared to glitter wherever the eye was turned; gold brokers; gold bought; gold sold; coaches for the gold fields; hurrah! for El Dorado, &c.; shops displaying every description of article possible for gold mining, picks, shovels, cradles, hoppers, dippers, pannicans, tin dishes, cullenders, trowels, tents, ropes, blocks, crow bars, sledge hammers, wedges, pumps, gold bags, revolvers, pistols, life preservers, and every sort of weapon for the destruction of life that ever was invented, together with all kinds of articles for consumption, not even excepting *golden lollypops*, were offered to adventurers. Nearly everybody you passed was talking about nuggets, ounces, Ophir, the Turon, lucky, unlucky, "got stuck up,"* or something about the diggings, which place hundreds were apparently going to, or coming from; the contrast of costume between the two was not a little amusing, as well as the faces of the lucky and unlucky, putting one in mind a good deal of a settling day for the Derby at Tattersalls. Parties

* Robbed.

Digitized by Google

going up were showing the first symptoms of *fever*, by appearing in a new blue serge frock, fustians, half boots, cabbage tree hat, and belt round the waist, attached to which was a quart tin pot for boiling tea, and had that morning said farewell to a razor for six months; over their backs was slung a blanket, or opossum rug, looking altogether as if they really meant something desperate, and nothing could prevent their getting rich. Those returning presented all the appearance of having been laid in a mixture of gamboge, yellow ochre, red lead, &c., being, from their night-caps to their boots, including both hands and faces, something of an orange colour, and much resembling "*the great unwashed.*"

On the arrival of any sort of conveyance with passengers from the diggings, all the people seemed to rush to hear the news. Questions without end were asked; Was the river going down? Could the beds be worked? What luck had you? Which is the best, Ophir or Turon? Any new diggings? and a hundred others. Some would answer that there was no place like it, nipping work, they intended to be *swells* all the rest of their lives, &c.; others swore it was all a *humbugging concern*, and not one in fifty did any good, or if they have any luck, they stood a chance of being bailed up, murdered, robbed, &c.

Having made up my mind to try my luck at any risk, I was not disposed to listen to any croakers, therefore, after finding some old acquaintances and

Digitized by Google

friends, and obtaining from them some letters to parties on the Turon, equipping myself as *new chum* digger, I took my place on the mail for Bathurst, carrying with me an extra couple of shirts, and a "'possum rug." Mounting the before-mentioned vehicle, (similar to our old mails at home,) on which there were *twenty-three* people outside; the number inside, I cannot vouch for, being sufficiently engaged in holding on—the language that was used being rather unfit for ears polite, more particularly that from a LADY of the Billingsgate description towards her beloved husband, and who, suiting the action to the word, made her clenched fist and his nose better acquainted than I imagine he liked, causing a cheer from a few of the Rowdies,* who encouraged her to repeat the dose, which she would certainly have done, had she not been stopped by some of those more peaceably inclined.

The lives of passengers by the Mails appear to be the last thing ever taken into consideration in New South Wales; contractors, I understood, get the most reckless men in the country to drive, who, if they succeed in keeping to their appointed time, was all that seemed to be thought necessary—and it was through the downright negligence of one of the fraternity, the whole of us that night were nearly sent to our graves. At the town on the road we were transferred into a sort of car (though fortunately by this time we had got rid of most of the

* Colonial for blackguards.

Digitized by Google

passengers); the night set in stormy, with heavy rain, &c. Blankets and opossum rugs were soon put in requisition, to keep out the piercing blast; and, crossing the Emu Plains at midnight, every one imagined that at all events there was no danger here, when, to their horror, over went the vehicle, turning a summerset down a bank; it appeared that a cutting had been made, to level the road where it was undulated—instead of keeping which, this driver (for he cannot be designated coachman) kindly took us up the bank, and upset all into the road; two respectable females were most seriously injured, and every one more or less hurt. After making the women as comfortable as circumstances would admit, a Mr. S—— and myself started in search of a public house, said to be about a mile distant; on our reaching it, the landlord (Mr. Hall) did everything in his power to render assistance, dispatching a man immediately for surgical aid, and in a short time every one reached his house.

On the following day a few others and myself again started, but several who had never been subjected to hard knocks in their lives, would not trust themselves any farther for all the gold on the Turon, and started off home again, resolving, should they once get back safe to Sydney, never to leave it again for the diggings.

Mount Victoria commences to rise from the Emu Plains, through which an immense cutting has been made in bye-gone days by the unhappy wretches

Digitized by Google

transported from home; if those stones, or that tree could speak (remarked some of the passengers), they could disclose scenes which had taken place of the most horrible and barbarous description that were ever perpetrated by man in any age to his fellow-man, leading many to commit open murder in hopes of being hung to get rid of their own lives.

The whole line of road to the diggings presented an animated appearance: drays, carts, cars, equestrians, pedestrians, and last, though not least to catch the eye, was an old man wheeling his *all* up in a barrow, his son harnessed in front, and his wife bringing up the rear, with a child on her back, who generally got a cheer from passers-by, or a question, as to how much she'd take for her "*swag*."* At every public house or coffee-shop on the road, all sorts of people were to be seen, and, excepting Esquimaux or Patagonians, every nation on earth might here be found represented.

Most delighted were we who got upset to arrive in the evening at Mr. Rotton's Hotel at Bathurst, which was almost as comfortable as any to be found in London; at dinner there was rather a medley society, several of whom indulged in various stories about the diggings; a young clerk, amongst others, expatiating largely of feats he had performed, almost surpassing Baron Munchausen, was abruptly pulled up by a sharp-nosed "down Easter," who inquired if he had ever been to *Californy*, because "I guess

* This party returned at Christmas with £1000.

Digitized by Google

if you had, you'd only call them *scrapings* here, instead of diggings, and, judging from appearances, I calculate you might be taken in as a *sweeping* partner;" a good deal of *chaff* ensued, in which the unfortunate clerk always got the worst, however it was in such good humour, that he could not help joining in the universal laugh that was set up at his expense.

The upset caused a considerable deal of abuse upon every one's shoulders connected with the Mails, one man slanged the Government for not looking into those sort of things more than they did; a second defended the Government, as a body, saying there was a man appointed for that purpose to keep things quiet,—"kindly took *tip* I guess," (interrupted the Yankee). "You're just right," answered the first speaker; as a matter of course, contractors, coachmen, &c. got their share from various quarters; the innumerable accidents that do occur, certainly call for some notice to be taken by the authorities; for in a week or ten days another one occurred, whereby a gentleman was killed, and (as I heard) the upset was occasioned by the carelessness of the same coachman, who was then dismissed; putting one in mind of the old story about locking the stable door when the horse was gone.

After dinner, beds were soon in request, every one making the most of the last *real* bed, (at all events having sheets on it) for the next three or four months.

Digitized by Google

Rising next morning at 6 o'clock, and as soon as breakfast was finished, *humping our swags*,* four or five set off on foot for the Turon, distant about 35 miles. Feeling myself too stiff and my back too painful from the capsize to keep up with my companions I trudged on by myself; the road, though only a bush one, was tolerably good over undulated plains with open forest country; most of the drays from Sydney turn off before reaching Bathurst, therefore with the occasional passing of a flock of sheep or the *melodious* voices of the "laughing jackass"† and magpie, nothing occurred worth relating, until about the middle of the day, when I came across the remains of a camp fire, from which I soon had a good blaze, and my new quart pot was put on to boil. The former party had evidently been luxuriating more than myself, for I found a two-pronged fork had been left behind, on which I soon stuck a piece of bacon to broil, and when cooked, substituting a biscuit for a plate and a fallen tree for a table, enjoyed a solitary pic-nic; the weather was very hot, and not being in a particular hurry, I unrolled my opossum rug, spreading it out under the shade of a gum-tree, and converting my haversack into a pillow, indulged in an hour or two's sleep; awakening with confused ideas about snakes, nuggets of gold, bushrangers, tarantulas,

* Getting a load on your back.

† A bird well known to Australians.

Digitized by Google

&c. all of which seemed to have appeared before me when in the arms of Morpheus. Packing up my traps I again made a start, and as evening drew nigh stopped occasionally, listening with ears intent, for the croak of a frog, a welcome sound in the Australian bush, denoting a water hole, by which I had intended camping for the night.

Just at dark, however, observing a fire in the distance, I made all haste towards it, and found it to be the camp fire of a man and his wife, with five or six children, and three other men, all *en route* for the diggings; after the usual salutations of "good evening, mate," &c. I asked permission to sleep under one of their drays for the night, which was instantly complied with, and the wife being from the Emerald Isle, (with the usual warm-heartedness of her country folk) said "sure the poor *bye's* hungree, you can *ate* a bit of steak now," thanking her kindly, and mentioning that although I was hungry, I had plenty with me, handing out at the same time the contents of the haversack, which she added to the steaks; I found from what they said they had not come very far that day, on account of their bullocks getting adrift. Holding up the two-pronged fork, I asked the old lady if she had ever seen it before, her surprise can be better imagined than described; and I think the children thought I was a witch or something of the sort; for having lost the said implement, I arrived just in time to save them getting a *bating* which the father had promised them all round

Digitized by Google

before supper, if they didn't find the fork; it so happened that the fire I stopped at to cook my dinner was the same they had camped at on the previous evening.

After supper one of the men and myself took a cross-cut saw in hand to fell a gum-tree, which was no sooner down, than every one set to work stripping it of its leaves for bedding, and rolling themselves up in rugs and blankets every one was ere long buried in oblivion, in spite of those gentlemen better known than respected, "fleas," with their winged colleagues, "musquitoes," who soon commenced their nocturnal depredations; although not sufficiently painful to keep a weary traveller awake, still they were annoying enough to make any one tumble about and restless, for I found on the following morning that I had rubbed all the leaves away from under my head, and that my face and the bottom of the frying pan had been forming an acquaintance during the night, causing no little amusement to the juvenile family, in which I heartily joined.

Starting in the morning as soon as possible I reached Mr. Suttor's head station, rather prettily situated on the side of a hill near the road; obtaining a drink of milk from a man who was milking the cows in the stockyard, and being directed where to find an inn I had heard of, I accordingly reached that habitation in a quarter of an hour, just as the people were going to breakfast; the landlord was rather more civil than the general run of bush publicans, particularly since the gold discoveries.

Digitized by Google

On being asked by the *man* of *all* work, whether I was going to have any *scauf*,* and replying in the affirmative, I was requested to take my seat alongside "that ere one-eyed cove," which I accordingly did, and endeavoured to do the agreeable to some lovely (?) daughters of Eve who were also on the road to the diggings; I thought I had seen a little of the world, but certainly never had the *honour* of putting my legs under the same table with such a queer lot before, but this is only a trifle; slang, as a matter of course, was the principal thing spoken; all of a sudden my one-eyed acquaintance asked his next door neighbour "whether he thought poor Bill so-and-so, as the *traps* had catched, would get *scragged*,† and if so, if he would be *turned off* at Bathurst or Sydney, for he should like to go and see the poor fellow the last time he stood on his legs?" His neighbour answered that he was not yet aware how it would go with him, that Jack Ketch from Bathurst had gone to the diggings, finding it pay better; if, therefore, he was so anxious to see him again, the best thing as he could do would be to go and offer to do the last good turn for him. I certainly thought to myself, as far as appearances went, he was well adapted for it, particularly as he gave a sort of fiendish smile, feeling flattered at the compliment.

This may give my readers some little idea of the

* Anything to eat. † Hanged.

Digitized by Google

gentry they are likely to meet occasionally should they go to try their luck in El Dorado.

Pursuing my journey again as soon as breakfast was over, sometimes being overtaken by people on horseback going to buy gold, and other business; occasionally with some who were returning cursing their bad luck, and now and then two or three ruffianly-looking fellows, whose very appearance told what their employment was. Presuming, however, from my appearance that I was not worth robbing, they left me alone; but for my own part, being anxious to conciliate the wayfarers, I generally for an excuse, asked either for a light to my pipe, or how much further was the Turon? &c. Reaching the hut of an out sheep station about one o'clock, I found it had been converted into an eating house, coffee shop, &c. (a cup of which cost 1*s* 6*d*.) I was here first impressed with the belief of what I had heard of the wealth said to have been accumulated by the labouring portion of the community, there being numerous bullock drivers, teamsters, diggers, &c. displaying notes and gold to a considerable amount, many making bets about what their teams of bullocks or horses could draw up the hill, &c. After resting an hour, I was not sorry to see a conveyance with two horses (called the mail) drive up, and having room for one, I gladly paid 15*s* for the remaining eight miles; on the box was a Methodist parson, who began speaking very seriously to the coachman, who in return paid so much attention to

Digitized by Google

his discourse, that it caused him to swear at his horses, every body, and every thing, almost every ten minutes, an oath worse if possible than the last. The remaining passengers, as far as I could ascertain, were a drunken doctor just landed from an emigrant ship, a chimney sweep, and a deserter from some regiment in New Zealand; he and the doctor were sworn friends, the latter apparently paid the soldier's way, who, of course, flattered him in return in the manner most agreeable to him.

Four o'clock brought us in sight of the canvas town of Sofala (so named after the town on the Coast of Guinea,) the novelty of which was rather amusing, together with the indescribable sort of bustle every one seemed to be in: swearing of bullock drivers, the unmusical sound of the cradles washing the auriferous soil at the river, an unfortunate new-comer who had just purchased a leg of mutton having "bai-bai" shouted after him; a miserable looking man riding a still more miserable horse might be *politely* requested to "*get inside, get inside*, you bloodsucker," and, as may be supposed, we new arrivals by the mail got our share, but none so much as the doctor, who having on a new pair of knee boots, was asked how much he'd take for them, whether he ever *had* paid for them, if he had not stolen them, and how kind it was of his mother to look out for his keeping his feet dry; he being rather green in the Colony, and not accustomed to Colonial *chaff*, got into a most furious rage, which caused more delight amongst the mob.

Digitized by Google

Making all the haste I could to pack up my traps and get out of this motley group, I suddenly heard—"Tanaqua Tarley!"* and looking round observed a New Zealander, whom I had met when travelling alone through the interior of that country. A little further on I met the carpenter of the ship I came out from England in, two years before: he told me he was doing a *rattling stroke.* Making my way through a town of tents, amongst which might be seen a large one with "Jones's Circus" inscribed in large letters; "blacksmith's primitive forges," "carpenters," "surgeons," "lemonade sellers," and innumerable others; one, certainly more amusing than the rest, announced the occupier to be "Hair Cutter and Tooth Drawer," I crossed the river by a swamp oak tree which had been cut down to form a bridge. Whilst I was crossing loud cries of "hold him! hold him!" came from a hundred voices, who thought, no doubt, my nerves might be affected as others were, and that I should tumble headlong into the river; twenty years, however, of a nautical life had rather too well accustomed me to that sort of work.

Reaching Golden Point, I came across more than twenty old acquaintances and friends in as many minutes—old messmates when in the Navy, fellow-passengers from England, and people whom I knew formerly in Sydney, &c. It being past six o'clock, every one was washing out their pans and returning to their tents. Being told all sorts of wonderful

* How do you do, Charley?

Digitized by Google

stories about the base metal it made my *fever* increase, feeling a sort of inclination to set to work at once, in spite of the night coming on; anxious, at all events, to have a look at the real stuff, I accompanied one down to see him wash out his tin dish; this being all novel to me, I could not understand how it was he did not wash the gold out, as well as the gravel and sand; however, I soon got initiated. It may perhaps be repeating what has been said before, in other books mentioning the processes of gold washing, but should any of my readers not have heard how the precious metal is separated from the soil, I will give a short description of the manner it was done on the Turon. The washing stuff being carried down in bags, buckets, barrows, &c. is emptied on to a sheet of bark, a quantity of water is then poured on it, and the cradler with a shovel mixes it up like mortar, after which he puts three or four shovels' full into the "hopper," which is a box fitting the head of the cradle,* with an iron bottom perforated with holes, then taking the handle of the cradle in one hand and the dipper in the other, he commences to rock, pouring water at the same time on to the stuff. This like every thing else requires a little practice, as it not unfrequently happens, that a novice working

* At Mount Alexander in Victoria puddling was adopted as well, making it easier to cradle, and two men were employed, one to rock the cradle and beat the stuff, the other to dip and pour water on to the stuff.

Digitized by Google

both hands at different things, upsets the water on to himself; the larger stones are then separated from the fine gold and gravel, which passes through the holes on to a tray, having small battens nailed to it, or scores cut, into which the gold gets washed. After five or six hoppers have been filled and washed out, the trays are lifted, carefully running a little water previously over it, in order to wash the gold into the scores. A tin dish about 20 inches wide at the top, 14 at the bottom and 6 deep, is laying on the ground, with another one inside it, full of smaller holes like a cullender, into which the contents of the tray are washed, and then the stuff goes through another riddling, the gravel remaining in the cullender, which is carefully searched for the larger pieces of gold, (or nuggets); taking afterwards the tin dish in both hands, and going to the edge of the stream, filling it with water, and giving it a sort of rotatory motion (which is soon acquired,) the gold sinks through the sand to the bottom of the dish, which being held in a sufficiently slanting position, so that the water in receding from the dish, washes by degrees the sand and gravel away, leaving the gold, which on the Turon was mixed with a great deal of emery; it is then put into a pannican, and in the evening placed on the fire for a time to dry; when dry, it is emptied on to a clean sheet of writing paper, when what little sand and dirt that was left, is blown away, and by applying a magnet, the emery that remains adheres to it; the gold is then put into wash leather

Digitized by Google

bags, or, that digger's treasure chest,—a match-box.

The price paid for gold at the time I was on the Turon, was from £2 15*s* to £3 per ounce, which must have afforded the large buyers a good profit. It was stated one house in Sydney alone cleared £50,000 by the purchase of 100,000 ounces, this I think must if anything have been underrated, for some of the gold fetches £4 an ounce at home. Gold buyers at the diggings were mostly agents for people in town, who received one shilling for every ounce sent down, this was of course weighed in the gross, which made a considerable difference, for a man purchasing in half ounces or ounces at a time must have got more surplus than when weighing fifty pounds weight in the lump; if, which is generally allowed the buyer, he take the turn of the scales in his favour; I never saw any scales in the colony during the earlier time that would tell to a grain or two, and it would take no more to turn the scales for a pound than it would for an ounce, consequently the buyer must have a greater profit; in addition to which there were plenty of unprincipled vagabonds amongst these buyers, who would measure a person's length in a moment who went to sell his gold; if they thought him a *flat* they would unhesitatingly drop in a small extra weight, or such a number of little ones, that the digger perhaps, not knowing how to add two and two together, would certainly be robbed; latterly, however, they

Digitized by Google

got more knowing, and have their own scales, &c. and can tell pretty nearly what they ought to get.

Finding nearly all my acquaintances had some how or other congregated in the same neighbourhood, we all dined that evening in one tent, and from the number of years that had elapsed since some of us had met, there was no lack of conversation about the various adventures, &c. that had happened to one or the other in the interim, each little expecting when we last parted, that the next time we met would be at the gold diggings. These parties had mostly come up comfortably fitted out, bringing their own horses and carts, &c. to convey all the *delicacies* of the season, but these are luxuries that many do not indulge in. The general contents of a digger's tent being a piece of bark nailed on to four posts driven into the ground for a table, and the same sort of thing on stretchers, to sleep and sit upon; perhaps a pickle case for the *president's* seat; an old sardine box converted into a salt cellar; a herring tin for a sugar basin; and knives that had been used for *fossicking, nuggeting,** *&c.* outside, were inside used for carving. Some indulge in plates, knives and forks, but diggers generally are not so particular, fingers being considered made before such articles, they are generally only used to take a chop or steak out of the frying pan, which placed on a piece of damper, formed with a panni-

* Poking in the cracks of rocks for nuggets.

Digitized by Google

can of tea, the general meal of the gold diggers. Many, however, had their wives and families with them, who used to keep the bark huts and tents a good deal more tidy and comfortable, at the same time adding their item to their husband's labours by washing, which varied from five to twelve shillings a dozen. On the men coming home, they would occasionally find a variation in their dinners; some parties of two or three would join others, and have between them a man and his wife to cook, and look after their tents, &c. thus making things a little more sociable; amongst the Turon diggers there was a great deal better feeling existing, than I subsequently observed in Victoria; no one scarcely remained to take care of their tents during the day, the cook *pro tem.* might occasionally visit it, to see the fire was alight, &c.; but at night no one ever thought of taking their mining tools away from their claim, and I scarcely ever heard of any being stolen, and no one ever made any hesitation of lending another a crowbar or anything they wanted, no matter whether stranger or not, it was sure of being returned; a very different case, however, at Mount Alexander, for there your eyes were scarcely safe in your head.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

DOING THE COMMISSIONERS—QUESTIONS FOR INTENDING EMIGRANTS—CAN THEY STAND THE WORK—COMMENCE DIGGING—SHEEP STATION POINT—BARS OF RIVERS—MR. WILLIAMS'S CLAIM—AVERAGE OF LUCKY AND UNLUCKY DIGGERS—MAITLAND MEN AS DIGGERS—TRAPPING THIEVES—AN ARTFUL DODGER—DIGGERS' CONVERSATION—A LUCKY HOLE—WASHING TAILINGS—QUARTZ VEINS.

NEXT morning every one was up as soon as the sun peeped over the hills, and as it was office hours at the Commissioner's Camp, one of my friends who was going in that direction obtained a license for me; these licenses have to be taken out every month, for which 30*s* is paid, and any one caught without one has to pay double; but if the Commissioners or the Government imagined they got license money for more than two-thirds of the people, I think they were much mistaken, no end of people giving the alarm, as soon as any of the officials appeared, who generally were mounted, when nothing was so easy as to drop down a hole, and cross over to the other side of the river, besides the many other ways that some of the "old hands" had of evading detection; one would say that he had left his certificate in the hole and would descend to get it; the place being undermined, he would come up another hole 100 yards off, and make a bolt of it. A Paddy

Digitized by Google

being rather suddenly pounced upon in a sly gully one day, and asked for his license, said, "My hands are so dirty, perhaps your honour will be so kind as to put your own hand into my breeches pocket, and you'll find it ben*athe* a roll of bank notes." The trooper dismounted, and driving his hand into the pocket, which was partially filled with mud, tobacco, pipes, all sorts of filth, and a roll of something which Pat said was the notes, cautioning him at the same time to be careful and not tear them, "Oh! all right," says Mr. Commissioner, "never mind pulling it out;" whereupon the policeman, not at all sorry, withdrew his hand; "Can't ye find it," says Pat, "shall I shew it to ye myself, your honour?" "Oh, no, that'll do." On their getting out of hearing, says the Irishman to his mates, "They'd ha' been far cliverer than I took them to be if they found a license there."

After obtaining a license and selecting an old acquaintance for a partner, we set off for a place named Thompson's Point, three miles up the river, where we had to carry every thing, commencing myself with placing a cradle on my head; any one who goes *to dig* may rely upon having a turn at almost all sorts of work before he has done, and any who propose hereafter leaving England had better ask themselves the following questions before they make up their minds, *in toto*, to go out to *dig*.

1st. Can they put up with any work which a rail-

Digitized by Google

way *naivie* has to do? If they can, it must then be imagined that they can just accomplish *one-half* the toil of a gold digger.

2nd. If by any chance their tent gets blown away, which frequently occurs, can they rough it out in a Gunyah, made of sticks and leaves, until another be procured, rain pouring the whole time; or *vice versâ*, under a burning sun, eat up with flies (as bad as any plague could be) during the day, fleas and musquitoes at night?

3rd. Have they got the constitution of lions, enabling them to work hard, through either rain, hail, sun, or snow, up to their knees in water under a hot sun, &c.; and put up with the following fare: mutton killed at 11 o'clock, which, if not on the fire by 12, may possibly *walk away*, being fly-blown the instant it is cold; damper,* made of flour and water, baked in the ashes of a wood-fire, the flour being sour, the cook has thrown in a handful of sugar to make it go down—or on asking the question, what makes it look so yellow, you get for answer, how could it be otherwise, when the water's thick enough to stand a spoon upright in?

4th. Can they put up with sinking fresh holes,

* Damper, when made with *good* flour, well kneaded, and properly attended to, is not so bad; but the ridiculous ideas which some young gentlemen possess, who have lived on French rolls, and worn kid gloves, with polished boots, all their lives, imagining the same things are to be found at the diggings, as at the Clarendon, induces me to make these remarks.

Digitized by Google

and being week after week, month after month, with scarcely a return of gold sufficient to pay expenses, or perhaps in debt?

5th. If, going to Mount Alexander, will they murmur, after a hard day's work, to take their turn watching at night with one of Mr. Bishop's improved revolvers to protect the party and the gold, (should they have any,) for fear of having their tents *rushed* by Van Demonian gentry?

Lastly. Can they, who have been accustomed to good society in England, put up with the *unpolished* lot to be met with generally at the diggings, and stand a little colonial slang?

Any one who feels convinced that he is capable of surmounting the inconveniences to which these questions allude, may venture to try his luck gold digging, and if he only stick to it perseveringly, braving *every* difficulty that comes in his way, and can afford to throw away time and money (for gold is not to be got without lots of silver being spent in obtaining it), he may yet stand as good a chance as ever there was of obtaining a fortune—for, in my humble opinion, there has been in some places, more particularly gullies, as much gold thrown away, nay, literally wasted, as ever came out of them, by the careless manner in which the ground has been turned over; doubtless these gullies cannot be worked satisfactorily until some different arrangement is made by Government. I believe some of the Companies gone out, would now lease the land that has

Digitized by Google

been dug over and deserted, but the Government price is considered too high.

The remainder of the day after conveying our *house* and *furniture*, consisting of a tea-kettle, grid-iron, a mattress made of calico, stuffed with grass and gum leaves, &c. &c., we had to employ ourselves erecting the *mansion*, felling trees for fire-wood (an old hollow tree forming a fire-place), digging trenches, &c. to prevent being flooded out of house and home when it rained, which during a thunder-storm it did sometimes in torrents; and so rapidly does the river rise, that upon one occasion, no less than three poor fellows met with a watery grave before they could get out of their holes.

On the following day we set to work most zealously, with imaginary ideas about the quantity of gold that we were to find *when* bottoming our claim. All around us on this hill (which are termed dry diggings) people were getting gold by the pound's weight in a day, making us of course more eager; after splitting slate rock with wedges and sledge-hammers, prizing out immense boulders with crow-bars, and picking amongst gravel cemented together as hard as iron (occasionally, through holding the handle too tight with the upper hand, a stone would fly off the pick and make your shin-bone remember it for a time), pounding all the stuff as fine as possible, and carrying it down in bags on our shoulders to the river's side, we commenced on Saturday to cradle; the proceeds of our labour for one week

Digitized by Google

came to about *six shillings*; not thinking it worth while splitting rocks in the *hopes* of finding pockets, or nests of gold, when people found it in other places without so much trouble, we commenced new places, my partner taking the upper course of the river, and myself going down. Meeting an acquaintance on the Sheep Station Point (*see frontispiece*), where such numbers were doing well; after sinking some holes, and buying others, &c. we managed at last to get hold of a tolerably good spot, called "dry diggings," merely from their being nearly on the top of the hill (*over the man's head who is felling the tree; see Illus.*), about eight feet deep. It cannot, I imagine, be doubted that the whole of this tract at one time was the bed of the river, since risen up by volcanic eruption, for the large stones, pebbles, &c. are just as smooth as those in the river; and for its having been subjected to fire, the quantity of burnt stuff, cinders, &c. found there, sufficiently denotes; some geologists and scientific men assert, that it is quite a mistake to suppose that the gold which looks as if it were burnt, has ever been in a state of fusion. Trusting that it may not be considered presumption on my part in making the following remarks, I venture to say, that repeatedly I have washed quantities of gold from the burnt stuff, and, I think, almost every digger on the Turon will bear me out as having himself done the same; and that the gold was so *brown* from the apparent action of fire, that it could scarcely

Digitized by Google

be discerned as such, unless by its specific gravity, or until well rubbed in emery, which was the only thing to brighten it. The adjoining claims, belonging to Messrs. Oakes of Parramatta, and some brothers named Hutchinson of Albury, were doing remarkably well. On the Turon you might take up as much ground as you liked, provided you took out a license for every 20 feet square; therefore, any one having the luck to strike upon a rich place, would immediately mark out a large piece of ground, and work it in small patches of 15 or 20 feet at a time. Labourers were hired at £2 a-week, besides their food, who would commence sinking a fresh hole as soon as the washing-stuff was reached in the first, leaving the *heads* of the department to manage the washing part; for, however honest labourers might be, or might wish to be, it was leaving open a great temptation when large nuggets appeared on the tray in the cradle—and, if people were robbed in this manner, they had only themselves to blame for their own laziness, or from having too many irons in the fire at once, viz. "Gold digging, store-keeping, having a butcher's stall, horses and carts to let for the day," &c., which were all good paying things in themselves: but if by giving too much time and attention to one branch of trade, and forgetting the *main object*, "gold working," they must expect pilfering to take place.

At Sheep Station Point, as well as many others which are designated Bars, the bed of the river had

Digitized by Google

been worked very profitably, as well as the "dry diggings," but the labour is very great; sometimes the diggers have all joined in large bodies and cut canals to turn the course of the river; others endeavour by means of pumping, bailing, scooping, &c. to keep the water low enough in the claims to get at the washing stuff. The upper side of the bars, or inner part of the curve of the rivers, have been mostly found the richest. The rivers are nothing more nor less than nature's own cradle on a large scale, the bars acting the same part as the cleets or grooves in the tray, and at the bottom of the wooden ones; wherever it happens that the tilted slate runs right across a stream, causing a regular stop for any heavy particles, an immense quantity of gold is generally found deposited there and in the crevices.

There are exceptions to this rule, but the only one I heard of was at Golden Point. Mr. Williams, a farmer from Windsor, had what was considered the richest claim on Golden Point, comprising the bank, and having also so much of the bed of the river belonging to it; after taking about £3000 or £4000 from his bank claim, he sold the remainder of the *dry* digging part, reserving the bed, which was situated at the very part where if any one had had to choose a place, he would select; I heard he was offered £1000 for it, but would not sell, and either registered his claim, or left some one to keep possession until the

Digitized by Google

river should subside, and returned home to spend a merry Christmas. A gentleman working near him with whom I was well acquainted, subsequently told me when at Mount Alexander, that when Williams returned, and commenced working his bed claim, it was found to be worthless, not even paying wages, shewing that gold digging, like many other things is a complete lottery, one man may make his fortune, whilst half-a-dozen round him scarcely hold their own, or are losers.

The conclusion I came to with respect to the miner's profits or losses from the different people I conversed with whilst on the Turon were as follows:

One-tenth did remarkably well.

Two-tenths did very fair.

Three-tenths held their own, without profit or loss.

And four-tenths did nothing at all, or lost.

This only relates to the *Turon*, but at Mount Alexander, or Victoria in general, it was at first very different (about this hereafter).

In addition to the above, store keepers, carpenters, pump makers, blacksmiths, and in fact, almost any trade, flourished, a shilling being charged for pointing a pickaxe, and every thing else in like proportion.

Prices used to fluctuate a good deal; latterly, living at the diggings was far cheaper than in town, for ten shillings you could indulge in *luxuries*, such as potatoes, and vegetables of any sort that might happen to reach the diggings; occasionally a dray loaded

Digitized by Google

with nothing but cabbages would arrive, and in half an hour the whole would be sold at 1*s* each, ready money; this was of course when first coming into season, doubtless they were cheaper after I left, for far beyond the neighbourhood of the Turon diggings, townships had been formed for years, and a considerable deal of cultivation had been going on, but the principal supplies came from either Bathurst or the Hunters' River district. At the latter place, I understand, the best farms in New South Wales are to be seen.

A great many settlers from that part, both gentlefolk and others in a humbler sphere of life, were working in the same neighbourhood as myself, and I could not help remarking, as well as others in our party, the good feeling that seemed to exist amongst the people from the Maitland district; should a dray arrive at a store belonging to a man from there, he had no occasion to go begging for people to lend him a hand to unload and get his goods stowed away, plenty coming voluntarily, and to hear the news, &c.; others might come across an immense stone in their claim and require more strength, they had only to say the word, when five or six would be there to assist; numbers of other instances I observed which do not require to be mentioned. I cannot here help remarking what a pity it is more in the Colony do not follow their example, for if a place is to thrive at all, people pulling together in that sort of manner,

Digitized by Google

cannot help making a place *advance* a great deal better than by backbiting each other whenever opportunity offers. I heard also, upon one occasion some Maitland men got robbed, and so determined were the remainder to find out the thieves if possible, that a regular plan was devised, and a gang of ruffians who laid upon the outskirts of the diggings, dropping in occasionally to see whom they could waylay, fell into a trap, when they were pounced upon by about 100, and handed over to the Commissioners and Police, by whom they were committed, and subsequently transported at Bathurst; it was so currently spoken of, that I do not doubt of there being truth connected with the story, although it might have been embellished before reaching my ears.

Every gold digger, more or less, keeps his eyes and ears open for any news that may arrive, which generally occurs once or twice a week, of some wonderful discovery of gold at some new place or another; either a boy had arrived at the Commissioners with a lump of gold, heaven only knows how many pounds it weighed! or, an old woman had found some in a bucket after washing a lot of potatoes, and her husband had made his fortune out of the garden afterwards. Something of the sort occurring one afternoon a little before Christmas, certainly led me to suspect tricks were occasionally played, and from the severe animadversions I have since heard passed upon the conduct of some people, there may be a good deal of truth

Digitized by Google

in what I heard said. Subsequently I wrote down as much as I could recollect in case I should ever have to refer to it, but having to wait until the evening, one half of what was said slipped my memory, but the purport of the whole is here given. A man came down to the river side where several people besides myself were cradling, and displayed a bag of nuggets, not any of them weighing less than 2 or 3 dwts. and some ½ oz. or more, stating at the same time, he had found them when digging on some creek about 60 or 70 miles off; a mob soon collected round, all anxious to hear where it was, &c. when all of a sudden, one amongst the lot called out, "Holloa, Bill, what are you come to work the dodge for Old —— here? I suppose you are to have the killing of them 20,000 miserable scabby sheep, if you can only gammon a lot of fools, or *waggabone* gold diggers to go and eat 'em, and when they get there, drive all their horses to the pound so that they can't get away in a hurry, and run to the Commissioners for a lot of Police, by way of a blind, saying he's afraid his house will be rushed; the old blackguard, he chiselled me out of my wages once, and I swore I'd be square with him before I died; look ye here, Bill, go back and tell him who it was said so, and say that whenever —— and he puts their heads together to work a dodge, they had better see no one's in the cupboard, and that the windows and doors are shut;" this caused a considerable jeering at the man with the

Digitized by Google

bag of gold, and I thought he stood a very good chance of being well ducked in the river, which doubtless he would have been, had not the man who previously spoke prevented it. On the cradlers resuming their work, one of them said, "That puts me in mind of ——, who's gone home to England, I understand, to sell an old water hole, which he has named Golden, or some other *Lake*, hoping to sell it to some poor fellows and let them in for a *good thing*." Another said, "It was like ——, who told every one he had been macadamizing his roads with gold; if such was the case, why was he so anxious to sell it?" "Because," answered his neighbour, "he had *salted* it himself and then taken his friends to look at it." Another one accused a government official of finding gold whenever a reward of £1000 or so was offered for its discovery. Some one else answered that he (the government official) did find it there, and what was more strange still, it was such very accommodating sort of gold, that it not only cradled itself, but was already sewn up in a wash-leather bag. The whole afternoon was spent in strange stories of this description, whether true or not, I cannot say, but imagine many were founded on fact, and perhaps it may make speculators a little cautious before getting hooked by such baits.

The description of soil, &c. in which the gold was found on the Turon differed in almost every gully, and on every hill; at Thompson's Point, on the side

Digitized by Google

C R R. del W L Walton, lith

Hullmandel & Walton, Lithog.

THOMPSONS POINT. RIVER TURON.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

of the hill, Messrs. Ellis, Murphy, Capt. Pugh, &c. were working (during the time I was there), they found gold amongst the stones, in the surface earth, and even just under tufts of grass; beneath the rocks which they worked was a description of slate, and in the crevices and pockets a great quantity was found; the bed claims of the river, immediately below, consisting of large boulders, stones, and a sort of clayey mud, were also very rich. On the opposite side of the river, two boys began to sink a hole on the hill, the first layer being good soil, then a layer of red clay; below that gravel and stones, apparently as if cemented together, and as hard as possible, after which a description of soft stuff, like pipe clay with reddish clay and small gravel and quartz mixed, lying on a sort of rock. This was so rich that they soon got £1000 out of it, and sold the claim for £900 more, but they appeared to have hit upon almost the only spot, for the news spreading far and wide, hundreds of pits were immediately sunk all round, and but little was afterwards found. Up Little Oakey Creek it lay mostly in the pipe clay, but so difficult to wash on account of the clay always rolling up into balls, that half the gold was lost. At this time "puddling," which doubtless makes the cradling far more easy, had not come into fashion; it is simply putting the washing stuff into a large tub (generally water casks sawn in half) and stirring it about with spades for the gold to sink to the bottom, one man keeping continually

Digitized by Google

pouring water into the tub, making the muddy stuff run over the top. The water, however, latterly became so extremely thick, even in the river, that quantities of fine gold escaped. Upon one occasion during a heavy flood, I went with a new clean bucket for water, setting it down in the tent to settle by the morning, and when filling the kettle next day I fancied I saw a speck at the bottom; carefully emptying what was left into a tin dish, and washing it properly, I found there were nine specks of fine scale gold, shewing how much is lost in that way. In many cases men used to pay others £20 a-week to be allowed to wash their tailings,* and made an excellent thing of it.

On Sheep Station Point the different strata through which the miners dug, varied a good deal according to the depth, which was from 6 to 35 feet. The bed rock generally arrived at, was a description of rotten rock, which broke into thin scaly cinders, and usually known as the "green rock," being that colour on the upper side, but when broken, it was reddish brown. I never heard of any one going through this rock whilst I was there, still there always seemed to be an opinion existing that any one who did, would be well repaid for his trouble; at the same time no one seemed inclined to waste his labour trying, leaving it for some more indefatigable person hereafter.

* Tailings mean the stuff that is thrown away and escapes out of the cradle.

Digitized by Google

The bank and bed claims at this Point were, I think, the most profitable of any; in one small place, a bank claim belonging to Messrs. Bode of Penrith, the gold was all in pipe clay, and although very fine, was extremely rich; repeatedly I have had lumps of the clay in my hands before being washed, and the gold was far thicker than carraway seeds in a cake; in all the dry digging parts burnt stuff would be repeatedly met with, generally amongst, or just above the washing stuff.

Veins of quartz in the slate were also found very rich, at times in pieces weighing a pound or more, and almost quite flat, as if it had been run into it, or jammed by an immense weight suddenly falling on them; these quartz veins were sometimes perpendicular, at others angular or horizontal, generally those that came under my own observation were nearly perpendicular. So much having been said upon this subject by eminent scientific men, I must refer my readers to some of the works on the Geology of Australia, should they wish to enter further into detail, only mentioning what came directly under my own observation whilst practically engaged in working gold, but towards the end of the book shall append a few more remarks made during the time I was Commissioner of Crown lands at Mount Alexander in Victoria.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

SNAKE STONE—SUDDEN RISE OF RIVERS—ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS—BISHOP OF SYDNEY—SUNDAY AT THE DIGGINGS—FEMALES—SICKNESS—PUBLICANS—NEW DIGGINGS—ATTACKED WITH SANDY BLIGHT—RETURN TO SYDNEY—GETTING A START IN THE COLONY—MR. NEWCHUM—NEWCHUM'S FOLLIES—OFFERS HIMSELF AS CLERK—ACCEPTS A SHEPHERD'S SITUATION—DESCRIPTION OF THE ROAD—JACK RATTLE—JACK'S CONSCIENCE—ARREST OF A GENT FOR HORSE STEALING—NEWCHUM'S NARROW ESCAPE—HIS PROPHECY—CURIOUS COINCIDENCE—A FRIEND IN NEED IS A FRIEND INDEED—NEWCHUM IN LOVE—THE PROPHECY VERIFIED—ONCE MORE IN A GOOD BED—A SAILOR'S ANSWER—A BULLY FINDING HIS MATCH—SAILOR LARNING HIM MANNERS—PLAYING A TRICK ON MY FRIENDS.

ANY one going to the gold regions will find a knowledge of chemistry extremely useful, as it happens repeatedly whilst searching for gold one comes across minerals, and I was perfectly surprised among so many people on the Turon under the *name* of *medical* men, finding so few taking such little apparent interest in that science. I have myself found several specimens, and seen numbers of people with others taking them to men who pretended they were wise in such things, and yet never found two to agree, one would say it

Digitized by Google

was platina, another tin, a third silver, and a fourth lead, when perhaps after all it was neither one or the other. I was afterwards sorry I did not take care of them to shew to the Rev. Mr. Clarke, the most eminent Geologist in Sydney, or to Mr. Hale the jeweller, whose shop window exhibits the most beautiful specimens of gold in various shapes, mixed with other ores, or in quartz, that I ever saw. As for the chemical properties of the earths, no one seemed to think they were worth testing; although many were of opinion that they contained properties which could be profitably turned into gold (coined); but the all absorbing topic, "gold digging," was so wrapped up in every body's mind, that nothing else was thought about.

I have repeatedly seen what were called diamonds, and have often found what at first appeared to be such, but on a closer examination found them only quartz crystals, with six-sided prisms.

Some beautiful specimens of gold and crystal quartz were found near the Wallaby Rocks.

A gentleman lately arrived from Australia is now exhibiting specimens of the various sorts of gold, &c., at Mr. Wyld's, in Leicester Square, and possesses, I believe, some real diamonds, as well as other precious stones, which, doubtless, will attract many to see them. I heard of sapphires and rubies having been found on the Macquarie, near to Wellington, but never saw any of the specimens myself.

Digitized by Google

During the time I was digging, I never saw but one petrifaction, which was a snake coiled up something like the snakestones found at Whitby; it was dug up by a man on the Sheep Station Point, about 25 feet below the surface; I tried hard to purchase it, but he refused taking an ounce of gold for it; imagining, I suppose, as I offered so much, that it was worth a good deal more; meeting him a few days afterwards, I again endeavoured to induce him to part with it, but he said he did not know what had become of it, which certainly rather annoyed me.

The gentleman appointed as Government Geologist for Victoria, (Mr. A. R. C. Selwyn), who arrived just previous to my leaving the Colony, will doubtless be able at a future period to enlighten the scientific world more on these subjects.

The weather towards December, and for two or three months following was overpoweringly hot, and from the number of people travelling to and fro, together with the stuff thrown up from the holes caused one continual dust, and when the "brick-fielders"* came on, they could hardly be faced from the sharp quartz and gravel that was flying about nearly blinding you; this was generally followed by a tremendous thunder-storm, with a deluge of rain, the water rushing down the gullies into the river so suddenly, rose it with such rapidity, that people had to run for their lives, leaving

* Heavy squalls.

Digitized by Google

cradles, dishes, gold and all to be washed away. One night during one of these storms, the wind got under the corner of my tent, and quickly blew it all to ribbons, leaving myself and mates drenched to the skin, to do the best we could for the remainder of the night. The next day was always more enjoyable, not only on account of its being cooler, but for the destruction it made amongst the flies, which were numerous and annoying beyond everything I ever heard of or saw in any part of the world. This was to be attributed in a great measure to the butchers, the offal from the slaughtering yards being thrown about, or tumbled into a deserted claim, the odour from which, after a shower of rain, and a hot sun, very much resembled bad mutton broth boiling. During the time I was there, no orders or regulations existed, or were ever issued by the authorities at the diggings, for the prevention of such nuisances; or, if they were, there was no attention paid to them.

The district of the Turon was, at that time, under the supervision of two Assistant Commissioners, Messrs. Johnson and King, who apparently had no sinecure berth of it; when not sitting on the bench as Magistrates, they were continually in their saddles, riding from one place to another, settling disputes about encroachments, seizing sly grog shops, hunting out ruffians, &c.; then having to sign their names some thousands of times every month, to licences for the clerks to issue; to take in gold from the diggers; write despatches; make up returns, &c. for Government weekly; besides giving answers to

Digitized by Google

innumerable questions. There were also many clerks, and a number of mounted police under a smart serjeant-major, who likewise was under the orders of the Commissioners.

Wages generally were about £2 a-week for labourers, besides their rations; Adelaide (or rather Cornish) miners could get £3, besides rations, &c. It repeatedly happened that gentlemen, or others with capital, would come up, and not wishing, nor feeling equal to working themselves, would make the following agreement:—the capitalist would find tools, provisions, &c., and advance money to purchase a good claim, and after paying expenses would take *one share* for having advanced the money; the gold to be handed in every evening, and divided at the end of the week. I was acquainted with one gentleman who had a dozen parties at work in that way, and said it paid him very well in the long run; but by some he lost the cash advanced, not from any dishonesty on the part of the men, but by the holes turning out valueless; others did it on half account, from the time of striking the bargain, the working party getting *one-half* the gold and the capitalist the *other half;* so if they succeeded in getting a good claim, the last-named might clear his outlay in a day, sometimes in a few hours, and the working community were money in pocket, without having run any risk.

Either of these plans were suitable to both parties, for many a poor fellow had nothing to commence with, and was glad to give his labour; whereas the

Digitized by Google

other endeavoured to get the best interest he could for his money.

The Bishop of Sydney visited the Turon whilst I was there, and laid the foundation of a church on the hill between the town of Sofala and Golden Point. A subscription was immediately raised, and in less than a week or ten days a large canvas building was erected, when a collection was made every Sunday. The church was generally as full as it could hold. As it may be supposed, there were sects of every description, who all had their different congregations, under a tree or elsewhere; some, however, of the preachers seemed to forget on a Monday what they had been saying on Sunday; or else were adopting the old saying of "do as I *say*, not as I *do*." If such was the case, they carried it out to the letter, for it was no uncommon thing to hear a man, on a dray for a pulpit, exhorting people to lay up for themselves treasures in Heaven, saying that gold was one of the devil's temptations, and the next morning you would see this identical person "rocking a cradle" in beautiful style; thereby frequently subjecting himself to some cutting remark by an occasional passer by.

Sunday was always kept as a holyday, not only on account of work being forbidden by the authorities on the Sabbath, but I should say eight-tenths of the people would not have worked had they been allowed; and in spite of all that has been said about the immorality caused by the discovery of gold and its consequences, I was perfectly surprised at the

Digitized by Google

small amount of crime that existed amongst so mixed a population, consisting of every grade of society, from the most hardened wretch from Norfolk Island, to a representative of every trade and profession that ever was heard of, not excepting honourables and captains in the royal navy, army officers, barristers, &c.; and I am confident there was not more vice (if even so much) than there would be in any town; of course, there were plenty of riotously-disposed people, but far more of the other way of thinking.

As far as females were concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that they might, and did consider themselves as safe, both regarding their persons and feelings, as if they were in Sydney or at home. I never heard on the Turon of any outrage or incivility (I have heard screaming and rows, but from whom did it proceed? invariably husband and wife). At the period of my leaving, great numbers of respectable women were arriving daily, and in the town of Sofala, bark, log, and weather boarded houses, with three or four inns had sprung up, the latter very properly always keeping closed on Sundays. A brickmaker was hard at work, and no doubt ere this many houses of that description are to be seen, with good shops, stores, &c.; as it was, the town had a lively appearance, which, but twelve months before, was inhabited only by kangaroos, cockatoos, and opossums, or a solitary shepherd with a flock of sheep. I understood that the shepherd on Sheep Station Point had resided there

Digitized by Google

twenty-two years, and never had been away but three times during that period, even the gold fever had not affected him; his argument was he cared for nobody, and nobody cared for him; therefore, what inducement was there for him to go and make a fool of himself by getting money for some one else to spend.

The greatest vice that men and boys (the latter especially) at the diggings, used to habituate themselves to, was swearing the most horrible oaths, and using coarse low-life language, so much so, that a man would hardly speak to his *friends* without calling them some sort of unmentionable name, but I invariably saw even that checked in a moment, if there was any female of apparent respectability in a tent, near or passing; shewing the moral influence woman has, even over the "*roughs*" at the diggings.

As the hot weather set in so did sickness commence, the principal diseases being fevers and dysentery, which carried off numbers, but the most disagreeable and painful complaint, was a kind of ophthalmia, called sandy blight, which seven-tenths of the people suffered from more or less; what its original cause is, did not seem to be fairly known, but doubtless when one got the disease, the infection was carried from one to the other by flies; the pain is most excruciating, being as if the eyes were filled with broken glass and sand, causing a great discharge. Medical men of any repute made fortunes, and so lucrative a profession was it, that any one, who carried pills about from an apothecary's

Digitized by Google

shop, came and announced themselves as *doctors*, &c.; I think it a great pity that the *bonâ fide* members of such an honourable profession did not shew them up as impostors.

As Christmas drew nigh most of those who had homes in the colony, and had been at all fortunate at the diggings, gave themselves a holiday and left to spend a merry time with their families and friends; those on the diggings took also "a spell," and enjoyed themselves one way or the other; pavilions and large feasting tents were placarded about, announcing good Christmas cheer, &c.; many old friends or acquaintances made up a party and dined at Mr. Jones's pavilion, which was an immense tent, with an awning above to keep it cool. In the centre was a long table, well furnished with all the luxuries of the season; on each side were a number of apartments six feet square, very nicely fitted with beds, dressing-tables, &c. looking extremely clean, and the charge reasonable.

The master of a vessel, with his mates as barmen, &c., opened a public house, and understanding the art of "throwing a sprat to catch a mackerel," roasted an ox whole, and had a plum pudding made as large as any boiler on the diggings could hold, at the same time knocking the head out of a cask of Barclay and Perkins, and giving different prizes to be won for various feats performed, &c., on boxing-day; the whole of which being gratuitously done, was, as may be supposed, the cause of more corks being drawn in his house that day than any other;

Digitized by Google

on New-year's day races were got up by some of the sporting world, when various prizes were contested, such as "The Commissioners' Stakes," "The Gold-digger's purse filled with nuggets," "The Ladies purse," &c.; the stewards were some of the Commissioners and other gentlemen at the diggings, through whose good arrangement everything went off well, and to the satisfaction of all parties; I never heard of any riots or rows throughout the day.

Nearly the whole month of January people remained in town, and the diggings seemed almost deserted, until towards the latter end, when they imagined that no more time was to be lost, so took their way back again.

New diggings being publicly announced as having been discovered, the other side of Goulburn, 70 miles S.E. of Bathurst as far as Maneeroo, near Twofold Bay; and to the North on the Peel River, also at the Hanging Rock at the head of Hunter's River, people became bewildered as to where they would go; but the truly *wonderful* discoveries, and the astounding reports from Mount Alexander, in the colony of Victoria (Port Phillip), drove people almost crazy; parties left the diggings on the Turon, 50 and a 100 strong, with bagpipes, cornopeans, or any sort of musical instrument; playing, firing guns, pistols, &c., enticing many to join and accompany them overland on foot, nearly 500 miles to the wonderful El Dorado; letters were received daily by different diggers from their friends in that locality, giving glow-

Digitized by Google

ing accounts; one old fellow said, that his son, who was only fourteen years of age, had returned home to his mother, after a week's absence only, and had made "a *h*independent fort*in* for life."

In the second week of January, I was attacked with the sandy blight, and in a couple of days was almost totally blind; the agony was dreadful, and I could not obtain relief from any remedy; I was moreover tormented with flies, which together with the intense heat inside an unlined calico tent, under a broiling sun, rendered my situation most miserable; after bearing it as well as I could for a fortnight, I determined to undergo any operation that the faculty could suggest, and submitted to have both eyes scarified, which afforded instant relief, and as soon as I could see properly, once more shouldered my blanket and wished good bye to my friends and the Turon diggings.

Finding a couple of drays in the town of Sofala, just about to start for Sydney, with no less than twenty-four people of *various* descriptions, I pitched my blanket on to one of the drays, after making a bargain with the driver, and started on foot to accompany them. Not a man of the whole lot of people who were returning could be classed amongst those that I mentioned at the commencement, as "No. 1, having done *very well*;" two had done *very fair*; five had made a little, or at all events had not lost (excepting their own time and labour for several months); and the rest had done nothing at all;

Digitized by Google

several, both English and American, who had been in California, were amongst the party, and intended immediately to embark again for the American El Dorado, saying, that at all events they could earn good wages there, namely, five dollars a day. On reaching Sydney and hearing the reports from Port Phillip, I think many were tempted to have a look there, before returning to California. Amongst the Americans I found two very intelligent fellows, who gave me a great deal of information respecting gold mining in their country, &c.; these young men had walked to California from the States, and their account of the journey was extremely interesting; as at that time they had to undergo great hardships, which are now doubtless considerably mitigated.

The first night we stopped at a farm about 14 or 15 miles from whence we started, but all the rooms inside the house were previously engaged; and whilst the English or Australian parties were concocting in their heads how they could manage, the Yankees had got a sort of hurricane house, built out of saplings, &c., and kindly offered me a shake down. Hunting about the premises, however, I found a heap of straw, into the middle of which I crawled with my blanket, and had the most comfortable bed of any of them, notwithstanding I was almost eaten up with fleas.

"Sly" grog selling is carried on in the most open manner; every three or four miles on the road between the diggings and the green swamp, the trade

Digitized by Google

was carried on to an immense extent, and such places were generally the haunts of bushrangers and others, who were there harboured by these *pests* of the bush.

The drays by which we were travelling were the property of one man, who told me that six months before he did not possess ten pounds in the world, being, however, rather fortunate at first when digging, he had laid his money out in horses and drays and commenced as a carrier, whereby he soon doubled his capital, and had now six or seven fine horse teams on the road; he said that he had been several years working without being able to save sufficient to give him a *start*, which no doubt is the great desiderata in every colony. A person getting a *start*, and persevering steadily, in whatever occupation it may be, and never letting the *grass grow* under his feet, is sure to do well, but the greatest difficulty that I observed before the gold was discovered was, getting something to START upon; there were, however, and are to this day, hundreds of young men, both sons of gentlemen and others of a lower sphere in life, having money, who go to the colonies, and for the first time, perhaps, in their lives are their own masters, with a small capital of a few hundred or a thousand pounds, who instead of endeavouring to find out the friends to whom they have letters of introduction, and seeking their advice, or trying to get something to do, no matter what at first, gaining thereby a little colonial expe-

Digitized by Google

rience, prefer *coming out* on a far grander scale, patronize the most expensive hotels, and, *of course*, the billiard rooms, which like most other public places of the sort, are oftentimes haunted by *gents*, who never, perhaps, take up a cue, or care a pin about the game, but belong to the class of "ne'er-do-wells," being too lazy or too dissipated to be of any use. These people soon make the acquaintance of a *rich Newchum*,* who, to make himself appear still grander than he is, talks largely of his wealth, home connections, &c. and asks about sheep and wool, as if he intended "squatting;" when these young men think it a fine opportunity to ask him to dine with *Papa*, he'll be *so glad* to see him, &c. but who, perhaps, wishes them (sons and all) in a *warmer* place, until one son whispers that he has some *tin*, when nothing can exceed his civility, as several things flash across the parent's eye, such as its being a good chance to get rid of old ewes, scabby sheep,

* I have selected this out of more than fifty cases that came to my ears during the time I was in the Colonies, (which, though apparently romances, are nevertheless true,) of young gentlemen, not excepting some with noble blood in their veins, who through their own folly on first arriving and patronizing the society here alluded to, have had to humble themselves to do almost anything to get a livelihood, whereas they might have been well off ere this had they been gifted with only *common sense*. I mention this subject hoping that those contemplating going out, under the same circumstances, will take this as a hint (in which manner I intend it) and not fall into the snares of the sharks by whom they will be surrounded.

Digitized by Google

&c. or a bit of bad ground, which is represented as likely to be worth 500 per cent more the next year, &c. Perhaps *Mama* hearing him talk largely of his connections in England, thinks he would not be a bad son-in-law; however, none of the baits take; the idea of squatting in the bush is the most distant thought ever entertained by Mr. Newchum; as for marrying and becoming a domesticated man, that also is entirely contrary to his ideas of happiness, and is out of the question; however, he cannot help returning the civility by giving a *tremendous spread*, talks largely about the turf, having, by way of passing the time on the voyage out, made himself perfectly acquainted with the pedigree of the "Flying Dutchman," "Canezou," and all the best horses, from studying the Racing Calendar, Bell's Life, &c. giving accounts of races as if he *really* had seen them, considering it far more amusing, than reading any thing likely to promote his welfare in the colony; with a head full of champagne, &c. he accompanies his guests to see their horses, some which are *sure to win* some race or another, he of course *buys* one or two, when his friends discover that his head is as much *cracked* as his new horses' heels. In the course of a very few weeks, or perhaps days, he finds himself stumped, and applies to his *friend* whom he first met in the billiard room, who consoles him by saying, how sorry (?) he is for him, but "my dear fellow, what a d—d fool you must have been;" my old governor always said, AFTER

Digitized by Google

you stopped coming to see us, that he was afraid (no doubt he was) you would soon run through all your money." Not finding any consolation he leaves, when his friend rushes into the billiard room to relate poor Newchum's misery to his fraternity, who deeply regret that it did not fall to their lot "fly-blowing him."*

He is then ashamed to shew his letters of introduction, and having no money to join a party going to the diggings, is not at all easy in his mind as to what his future prospects in the colony will be; taking up the Morning Herald he sees sundry advertisements, and amongst others, "Wanted a steady man as Clerk;" bristling up at the idea, knowing he can write well, applies immediately at the place. On entering the counting house, and whilst talking to the head clerk, he perceives the others whispering and grinning, when one advances and asks if he has come to *buy horses*, the remainder bursting into laughter, causes him to rush out of the office like the shot from a thirty-two pounder, and almost frantic, he makes the best of his way for—he does not exactly know where—but it is not long before his mind is relieved on that point by a policeman, who gives him a night's lodging in the lock-up, and takes him before his Worship the Mayor on the following morning, for being drunk and disorderly in the street, when he gets fined 10*s*, or a day or two in the goal, and protesting his in-

* Being "fly-blown" is a Colonial term for being "done *up*."

Digitized by Google

nocence, gets one week perhaps for contempt of court. His time being expired, and not knowing where to put his head, he tumbles into a public house, observing on a placard, "Shepherds wanted," and offers himself for that situation or hut keeper; as a matter of course, the publican says it is a most difficult thing to get at present (although he may be wanting a thousand), for gentlemen in the country do not like young men who have just come from England, and not accustomed to the bush, (having soon taken his measure, and found that he had not been long from home, wishing to beat him down), at all events they would not give them any thing like the wages they would to old hands. Glad, however, to have any thing in view, he readily accepted the publican's terms, who says he trusts that for having got him a *good* situation at 1*s* per diem, which equalled 30*s* per month, and *eighteen pounds, five shillings* per annum, (whereas had he obeyed his instructions he only ought to have offered him 9*d* per diem,) he would not mind giving him the odd five shillings; this he did immediately, having pawned and sold a few clothes to raise the wind, the *kind* publican telling him what a delightful place he was going to, so like home, that it had been called "New England." Having paid his five shillings, and imagining it was some nice place close at hand, he was most thankful to Mr. Boniface, and begged to be informed how he should find out this *Paradise*, on being told it was only about 400 miles off, he

Digitized by Google

started back for a moment, but re-assuming his attitude, listened most attentively as Mr. B. went on describing his route for the first day (as quickly as a waiter in an eating house in the City runs over the number of soups, fish, joints, vegetables, &c. now hot), where he was to make further inquiry; he was to leave by such a road until reaching a scrub, keep to the right of that, to the left of a hill with two trees on the top, through the bush, and scramble up a bank about 500 feet high, when he would reach the Table Land, keep along that until he came to a gully, descending which, ford several creeks, not more than ankle deep (which generally means up to your neck), *find* a track through the whip stick scrub, otherwise he might, perhaps, be lost altogether, after swimming a small river about 100 yards wide he'd arrive at Old Geordy's, a stringy bark settler, give the cove this note and the old 'ooman 'll grub you, then you can get a shake down amongst the chaff in the barn; finishing with—"Come, you must look sharp and be off, otherwise the rains will set in, and the rivers and creeks be so much swollen, that you may make certain of being drowned;" reminding him to be sure to get some tea, and a quart pot to boil water in, for he might possibly get lost now and then on the road. Every thing that had been said by Mr. Boniface being so entirely opposed to the feelings and ideas of poor Newchum, and not understanding half that was said to him, imagining a "stringy bark settler" to be some savage or

Digitized by Google

other in the forest, stood for some moments dumbfounded. However, recollecting himself, he got out of the house, and was walking at a hurried pace along the street, when he was saluted by—"Holloa, Newchum! my old buck, how are you?" Looking round, he perceived it was a fellow-passenger from England, generally called "Jack Rattle," who had been carrying on much the same sort of game as himself, but differed very much in disposition. Poor Mr. Newchum's fine feelings rather getting the better of him, whereas Jack Rattle spoke of it only as another *spree* in his life; but, now that he'd got an appointment under *Government*, he should keep quiet until he got enough scraped together to go to the diggings.

"An appointment under Government!" said Newchum (inquiringly).

"Yes, my dear fellow," answered Jack, "and if you wer'nt such a devilish ugly fellow, I'd get you one also, having lots of friends in the R. K. I. L. C.'s."

"Who are they?" said Newchum.

Jack, keeping his curiosity up to its highest pitch, at last told him, "Why R. K. I. L. C. are the initials of our corps, which the officers have printed on their visiting cards, just to abbreviate *Royal Kangaroo Island Light Cavalry*, alias the Gold-mounted Police, in which honourable corps your humble servant is a *trooper*."

Upon which Newchum said, "and I've taken the situation of *shepherd*, at £18 per annum."

Digitized by Google

Jack laughed heartily, called him a regular flat, &c. and said,—"Why, I get 8*s* a-day, fed, clothed, and a horse to ride into the bargain; besides coming in for all the fun, and a share of all the fines."

Newchum. "What fines?"

Jack. "Why for picking up Lushingtons, and swearing now and then that chaps were riotous, when perhaps I might be miles away at the time."

Newchum. "Have you ever done that, Jack?"

Jack. "Done it! I should think so; why if I didn't, the fellows would break my head with their truncheons, and call me a fool, &c. for not looking after my own interest. Why, not a week ago, I was had up as a witness to swear something against a fellow, and I never even troubled my head to look whether I'd ever seen him before. He, of course, was fined; and, for protesting his innocence, got committed for a week. That's the way they serve chaps out who will be obstinate, and not pay down ten bob when they are asked."

Newchum. "Did not your conscience smite you when perjuring yourself?"

Jack. "Conscience! Don't you recollect that old fellow whom I spoke to on the pier at Gravesend before leaving, who had just come home from here? because he said the best thing to be done with 'conscience' was to lock it up in a box when going to a colony, for people could not get rich there with one; but, IF I should come across a *thoroughly* conscientious man, to unlock the box and take out mine.

Digitized by Google

However, old boy, not having found such a man yet, I have followed his advice, and shall stick to it. I may by-and-bye have to take a sanctified turn, for I hear that trade pays as well as gold digging; I may then require a little of it."

Newchum (*having turned rather pale.*) "But, Jack, don't the police do here as at home, search any one that they take up, and if they find any thing, take care to return it next day?"

Jack (*laughing.*) "I should think they just did, and right good care they take of what is found; and another thing they take precious good care of, which is, if a fellow has a good swag of money, just to return him sufficient to pay his fine the next day, and perhaps a little over to get a breakfast with. You should have seen the lark there was last night, when the detectives entered one of the billiard-rooms, stepping up to, and catching a swell-looking cove a clout on the back of his head (which might almost have floored a bullock), intimating at the same time, in the most polite manner, that he was his (the detective's) prisoner, 'I arrest you on a charge of horse stealing;' and before he had time to recover himself, was ornamented with a beautiful pair of bright 'darbies.'* There was a bit of a row directly, some of his pals saying, 'it was a shame a *gentleman* should be treated in that way.' The detective coolly replied: 'Well, gentlemen, just walk up to the police-office,

* Handcuffs.

Digitized by Google

and no doubt the Commissioner will allow you to stand bail for him.' The cues were laid down, coats and hats put on, and nearly a dozen followed, murmuring and cursing in low terms at the d—d traps, not, however, too low to escape the quick ears of the police; for, on arriving at the station, and being asked to walk inside, they were informed that they also were prisoners, the charge against them being for resisting the police in the execution of their duty. This morning the whole dozen were fined £10 each, the police getting half, which was not a bad haul for two men in one night."

Newchum (*in rather an agitated state.*) "What became of the first fellow that was arrested for horse-stealing?"

Jack. "Oh! he, of course, was fully committed to take his trial, and is sure of getting 'lagged,' but the funniest thing was, how near he was getting out of it, because, I heard, he had hooked some cove in for a lot of money which he had pocketed, but the fellow had never taken the horses away from where he had them stabled, luckily for him, or he would have been lagged instead; and had he not been trying to sell them a second time, the chances are, he never would have been caught, but they say it's an old game of his, or at all events, he has often been suspected; his father, they say, is well to do, and has tried to kick this chap out once or twice, but he can't get rid of him, however, I think Government will take care of him now for six or seven years."

Digitized by Google

Newchum, reflecting how near, by giving way to his own vanity and conceit, it had placed him in the felon's dock, and being manacled as a transport; for Jack's description of the man's appearance so fully agreed with that of his *dear friend*, who so kindly wished to *introduce* him into society, by asking him to dine with *papa*, subsequently accepting his hospitality, and then selling him stolen horses, made him not sorry to wish Jack good bye, and get away somewhere to give vent to his feelings. Bursting into tears as he fell on his knees to thank Providence for his escape, resolving from that moment, should opportunity offer, to shew that although he had been foolish at first, he had learnt a lesson which should serve as an example for the remainder of his life. The last words of Jack were, when wishing him good bye, "if you want to get rich, you must do as I do, and when you are so, you'll be '*all there*,' amongst the nobs out here, for they don't care *how* you get it, provided you *do* get lots of money."

Newchum turning away, said to himself, "poor Jack, if some one does not lead him to the gallows, or to die in the gaol on the hill, it will be a wonder."

To go through the whole of the history, as I obtained it, of the three characters mentioned, might prove rather tedious to my readers, therefore to make it short, I shall just give their finale.

Newchum after six weeks managed to reach his destination, and although both old Boniface and himself got the usual bush language heaped upon

Digitized by Google

their shoulders, the one for having hired such a fellow, and the other for offering himself, he made up his mind to put up with everything. After a time, however, the overseer found him so useful, writing his letters, keeping accounts correctly, &c.; that when the owner of the station came, he mentioned it to him, at the same time, saying, that he thought he had seen far better days.

One evening the *Cove** sent for him, and speaking in a kind manner, asked him his history, which he unhesitatingly told; the surprise of both may be better imagined than described, when it turned out, that this very gentleman was the owner of the horses before mentioned, who said, how delighted he was that the fellow whom he had at last discovered, had got seven years of it on the roads; asking Newchum to let him see his letters of introduction, which was instantly complied with, and finding one to a particular friend, he enclosed it in a letter from himself, and forwarded it by one of his wool drays, telling him at the same time, that if he found what he had been relating was the truth, he should never want for a friend so long as he was alive, but if the contrary, he should kick him out of the house; he assured him with an unmistakeable sort of smile that every word was true, feeling within himself a mixture of joy and gratitude that words could not express. Three weeks afterwards, some one was announced galloping across the plain towards the house, and who should it

* Cove in the Colonies generally means the master.

Digitized by Google

prove but the identical person to whom the letter was addressed, after the usual "how are you, old fellow, most happy to see you, &c." from the hospitable owner of the station, the newly arrived asked, "but where's Newchum?" who on being pointed out, almost embraced him as a father, and said to the other, this is the little fellow whom I used to nurse some two or three and twenty years ago; then asking how his mother and sisters were, he rather dropped his head, and said, "he had never had courage to write to them, having behaved so foolishly." "Ah! well, (says the old gentleman), never mind that now, sit down at once and say you've fallen in with me, and that I've told you to say, you shall never want for a friend;" recollecting himself he said, "Oh! I forgot, *I* havn't got you altogether, you had better say *my* most intimate friend has taken you by the hand, and *I* guarantee your being well taken care of, and that *I* hope some day to see you one of the wealthy men in the Colony." Newchum's heart was so overwhelmed with gratitude to his benefactors that he could hardly speak, and much less write at the moment, after awhile, however, he wrote home and told all his adventures, first of all setting their minds at rest, before he disclosed the miseries he had gone through on account of his own folly. The gentleman of the station was not long in finding out Newchum's real principles, and he lived with him, instead of with the men as he had at first done, and his conduct soon found him plenty of friends.

Digitized by Google

Six months afterwards, having to go to town to transact business about shipping the *Cove's* wool, &c. and stopping at the friend's house to whom he had letters, was introduced to his only daughter, and for the first time did poor Newchum begin to feel that Cupid had sent an arrow into his heart. Somebody most *conveniently* called to see *Papa* on particular business that evening, and before he returned Emily's affections had been won. It was *said* (as people must always *say* something), that she subsequently told (*quite confidentially* of course), one of her friends, that she was in love with him without ever having seen him, for from her father's description, she felt that he must be one of those people whom God had watched over, and shewn him a path, by following which, had saved him from future misery, and was *now* in the same position as when taking a farewell from his friends in England, and before he fell into low society; this had originated on board a ship, by associating himself with that class of *gent*, who are now swarming out to the Colony, imagining that they have nothing to do, but just go out and pick up gold in the same manner as children go and pick up shells on the beach at Scarborough; I need hardly add that in a few weeks a gay wedding took place, the father-in-law purchased a share in a station for Newchum, who went with his bride to live on the estate, the other partner wanting to go to England for a few years. When this was narrated to me last February twelvemonth,

Digitized by Google

not a happier couple were said to exist than Mr. and Mrs. N—, with every prospect of seeing the day that he should become the prosperous individual his benefactor anticipated.

A circumstance occurred a few days before the wedding that called the father (he being a magistrate) to sit on the bench, when the intended son-in-law accompanied him; it was to hear some case of forgery, and who should the unhappy culprit be but "Jack Rattle." The bench committed him, and being subsequently tried, was convicted, and sentenced to accompany the billiard-room gentleman for a few years, thus terminating *their* future happiness, and this story; which, being in the main particulars true, may therefore not inaptly be termed a "Romance in real life."

Having left my drays progressing towards Sydney (when commencing this digression), I again pick them up within a few miles of the inn under Mount Victoria. The rain, which poured down the whole day, made every one look like drowned rats, when an old fellow, turning round to me, said, "Holloa, mate, why one'd think you were come to do a bit of rainbow." Not exactly comprehending at first what he meant, but casting my eye downwards, where his were gazing, I observed that my *ducks*, which once upon a time were white, but had long lost that appearance for an orange tint, had now assumed another colour; for, having on a lamb's-wool plaid jumper of various *shades*, the

Digitized by Google

drenching rain had made the colours run down my trowsers, causing my unshorn acquaintance to put the question he did to me.

Arriving at the inn on the road, and making use of the name of one of my friends in Sydney, whom I knew frequently travelled that way, "mine host" lent me some dry things; and after supper I was most delighted once more to get into a comfortable bed-room, and luxuriate again between a pair of sheets, which I felt very much inclined to indulge in all the following day, grumbling considerably next morning, when I heard some one say, " Come, bear a hand, they're a yoking up."

After resuming my own old *garb*, and hastily swallowing a cup of coffee, &c. we again made a start, in the midst of a deluge of rain; however, the landlady (God bless her) having kindly got my blanket dry, I wrapped myself "*â la Maorie,*" which kept me more comfortable than the rest, but the roadway was half up to the knees in mud, and of a consistency resembling a mixture of soft soap and birdlime.

Reaching another inn in the course of the afternoon, and a coach having been put on to run to Sydney, I determined once more to risk my life in a New South Wales vehicle, although I declared, when at Bathurst some months previous, that I never would do such a mad trick again.

One of my fellow-passengers was an eminent barrister in Sydney, who had been to Bathurst attending the assizes; he seemed to imagine, that as far as

Digitized by Google

his *legal* advice was concerned, he might as well have remained in Sydney; for the jury found nearly every one "guilty" who were brought before them. This fact certainly seemed to prevail to a great extent all over the Australian Colonies, though doubtless it was deserved.

The nearer we approached the metropolis did scenes of recklessness and debauchery increase. At almost every public-house between Paramatta and Sydney were fights and brawls of all descriptions; men laying by the road-side, to all appearance dead; for, in spite of the rain and water that was running in torrents down the gutters, "there they lay." As the coachman was walking his horses up a hill, he said to a sailor on foot, "I say, mate, pull that poor fellow's head out of the ditch." When Jack replied: "D'ye take me for a —— fool? The chap may be dead, and I may be hung for murder if I touches him; at all events, I should get lagged for highway robbery." After this, he jumped on to the coach, and talking to the driver, said: "Not long ago, a drayman, moving a drunken chap out of the middle of the road, to save him from being driven over and killed, had been accused of being a bushranger, and the chances were he would get *lagged*, if not *scragged*, should the chap die, 'cause they'd sure to say he was *o*cussed." "Most likely he was," said I; when both coachman and he, in one breath said: "No doubt about that, mate! but he warn't the cove as *o*cussed him."

Within a few miles of town the coach pulled up

Digitized by Google

to water the horses at one of the inns, when the barman came rushing out with the usual—"Now, gents, what's to be?" and getting no answer (except from a female voice inside, who asked very civilly for a glass of water), replied: "Oh! we doesn't do business in that way; we never gives *nothing*, and as for selling water, why that's out o' the question."

Female. "I'm quite faint for want of a little."

Barman. "Well, I can't help your fainting, marm."

Jack, who was sitting on the near side, hearing what was said, jumped down nearly on the top of the barman, and grasping him, gave the fellow a shake that turned him pale as death; and swearing the most horrible oaths, ordered a nobbler of brandy, and a glass of cold water. Whereupon the landlord (or some one who was big enough to *bounce* a bit) came out, saying, how dare he treat one of his servants in that way? Jack coolly replied that, "if he gave him any of his lip, he'd *sarve* him out in the same manner; or if he preferred it, would fight him for fifty pounds down on the nail, or if he'd go to Sydney he'd make it five hundred." At the same time intimating that he had not forgot being robbed there the last time he came that way; but he'd think nothing of that provided he got satisfaction. As a matter of course a whole mob of fellows was soon collected round. Every one cheering on Jack, made the other, like most bullies, pretty quickly beat a retreat. The barman, however, re-appeared;

Digitized by Google

taking good care to keep a civil tongue. Jack, seizing the tray, implored the lady to take the brandy with the water, but finding it of no avail, tossed it off himself, wishing every one "success," and resuming his seat, added "there was nothing like *larning* these chaps manners."

Nothing occurred during the remainder of the journey, except master Jack's *chaffing* almost every one who passed on their road to the diggings, either they were "too soon," or "too late," with a little occasional slang not very fit to be repeated. On the coach entering Sydney, he began to cheer most lustily, and every one thinking he had found another hundred weight of gold, ran as hard as they could to the coach office; on pulling up, half a hundred questions were asked him, "what have you found? where about's was it? what does it weigh? &c. &c." "Why, I'll tell you," says Jack, "if you'll only let me get a little breath: why (pants) why; I see (again pants) you're all a bigger set of fools than I took you for;" he then disappeared amongst the crowd in a second, expecting, I conclude, that this time they were too strong for him.

Thinking I would try whether any of my friends recollected me in my present altered appearance, I went and knocked at their door; the maid, who answered, started back on seeing "an *orrid* dirty digger," and particularly when I made most anxious inquiries as to where I* was; she said she'd call

* The author.

Digitized by Google

missus, who came to the passage, and replied, I'd gone to the diggings six months ago, and after a little talk, I was requested to withdraw, otherwise a policeman would be called to take me into custody; I could now no longer keep my countenance, and burst out laughing, which soon betrayed the deception.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

SHIPPING OFFICES—GOVERNMENT HOUSE—A SMALL CRAFT'S STEWARD—STEWARD'S GAMMON—MR. O'PHLACEMALL—MR. RUMKHOVE—MR. O'P. A BIT OF A SAILOR—A ROWDY—EMBARK ON BOARD THE VENTURESOME—SQUARETOES' CURE FOR THE STOMACH ACHE—HIS GREASINESS THE COOK—A CANNY SCOT—THE VESSEL ASHORE—MR. O'P. SATISFIED—ARRIVE IN HOBSON'S BAY—MELBOURNE ARGUS—THE POLICE FORCE.

WHATEVER excitement Sydney might have portrayed at the first commencement of the gold discoveries, I will not pretend to say, but now it was in a perfect ferment; the Shamrock (steamer) arriving from Melbourne with some *ton* or more of gold; and the reports she brought of the Mount Alexander diggings fully confirming all that had been heard before; many returned by her after an absence of six weeks, with their *thousands* of pounds. The demand for almost every description of article, both useful and ornamental in Victoria, was in many instances scarcely even to be procured in Sydney, and then only at an enormous price; every cart, dray, or horse, that could be obtained, was, from morning to night, employed, carrying down goods to the wharfs; vessels of every description were laid on for Melbourne and Geelong, and got a cargo, either of living or dead material in an instant; on the quays, in the warehouses,

Digitized by Google

merchants offices, banks, streets, on board vessels, the *fever* raged to a great extent, the offices of agents for passenger vessels, presented also some

Shipping Office.

dangerous cases, a clerk in one, having a most severe attack, invariably answered yes for no, and *vice versâ*; sometimes £5 for £10, or £20 for £15; when asked if there was any room in such a vessel, and what the passage money? confusing the names of vessels, occasionally by saying "not yet arrived," instead of "just going to sail," &c.

I began also to abuse my own folly, for not having gone to Melbourne from New Zealand, as I first intended, and therefore made all the haste I could to remedy the evil, and booked myself on board a small schooner, intending to sail the next

Digitized by Google

day, so after passing half an hour in a barber's shop, and getting parboiled in a hot bath, found myself once more a little comfortable.

Two or three days elapsing before the vessel got away, gave me time to look around. Few places that I have visited have made more progress than Sydney; some shops in George and Pitt Streets put one almost in mind of some of the best streets in London. The pavement of most of the streets being laid with flag-stones, the town lighted with gas, and the circular wharf round Sydney Cove are certainly great improvements. One thing I was rather surprised at, that no improvement had taken place, nor did there seem to be any present intention of better fortifying Sydney Harbour. Fort Macquarie and Dawes Battery (with not a gun, I believe, that would fire six rounds), being just the same miserable places as ever they were; and for some reason or other, poor "Pinchgut" has partly been carried away. This is a small island, that almost seems to have been put there purposely to defend the harbour. Had they taken it away altogether, well and good, but the mistake is only found out after a large sum of money has been expended in pulling it down, and now double the amount is required to reinstate it; like the railway men, after clearing a line by upsetting all the carriages over an embankment after an accident, saying, "there, that'll give many a poor fellow a job, and cost a good bit of money to get them up here again." Government House, which was only half built when I was last there, is

Digitized by Google

now the most conspicuous object after rounding Bradley's Head; and the Botanical Gardens, immediately below in Farm Cove, give it altogether a very picturesque appearance, particularly on a flower-show day, when all the beauty and fashion contribute to enliven the scene.

On the road to the Heads, a man has set up a sort of *zoological garden*, where, I believe, all the birds and animals indigenous to the Colony are to be seen alive, and where the good folk of Sydney go for pic-nics, &c.; and not a few to spend the *honeymoon*.

Yachting and boat sailing, with occasional regattas, afford great amusement to those fond of such sport, the harbour of Port Jackson being well adapted for it.

Small steamers are continually in demand for conveying pic-nic parties to the innumerable coves, &c. with which the harbour abounds; and generally being accompanied by a band of music, the green sward, or sometimes even the sandy beach, is converted into a place to indulge in the light fantastic toe.

Having got my baggage on board the schooner, and perceiving one of those beings, who are never to be mistaken for a small craft's Steward, from his thin, haggard face, long nose, and black curly hair, with a white (when it was clean) jacket on, a black silk waistcoat, three or four inches longer than his jacket, a pair of short, striped, green and black trowsers, Wellington boots, and a cap with a gold

Digitized by Google

band on it. This man was as busy as possible doing nothing, except jumping about, as if he had St. Vitus's dance; abusing a boy for not getting more loaves; and an old woman for not having sufficient milk; the butcher for bringing two hind quarters instead of fore ones; and going to *punch the block* of a man three times his size, for not making more haste in bringing down the *ve*getables, who advised him to "*shut up*,"* unless he wanted a cold bath, which, from his proximity to the wharf, would not have taken much trouble in administering; he, with the keenness of "Gents" of his profession, perceiving a few of the passengers standing by, was thus shewing his zeal, when one of them remarked to me—"What a smart fellow that steward seems. I've no doubt we shall live well on board; see how he blows the fellows up for not bringing down enough," &c.

All that's "gammon," said I, he knows just as well as *I* do, that they all brought down exactly what was purchased; he's had so much money to lay out, and do you suppose he is fool enough to get the best? If he is, he ought to have a gold medal given him, for I never came across a steward possessing those ideas before; he knows very well that the vessel will be outside the Heads before any one will think of asking, and then it will be of no use, for he will be sure to say he bought others, and paid for them; and who's to dispute it? As for the owner or captain threatening to see into it next voyage, and kick the

* Hold his tongue.

Digitized by Google

blackguard out, those are only words for the winds, not for me, for I'm too old a sailor for that yarn. Stepping up to the functionary, thinking there was really no mistake as to his calling, I said, with the usual quick phraseology, as if in a violent hurry.

"Stew'ad, Cap'n Squaretoes aboard?" who answered as quickly, "Yes, Sir! No, Sir! Stop, Sir! I'll see, Sir!!" jumped on board like a monkey let out of a cage; and stepping on to a plank that had been left, not in a very firm position, nearly gave himself the cold bath, which the *ve*getable carrier had *kindly* offered him; the other end of the plank at the same time, upsetting a bucket of water off the break of the poop, on to the top of an old gentleman's head, with a pair of spectacles on, who was ascending the companion ladder, after taking a survey of the *state* apartments; which cool reception made him *perfectly* satisfied in his own mind, that the deck would be *dreadfully* wet at sea.

The steward came limping up in a minute or two, saying, "No, Sir, the Captain warn't there, but here comes the owner;" and on turning round, I commenced with, "Good morning, Mister-r-r-r-"

"O'Phlacemall's my name, Sir," relieving me as he thought of my dilemma.

"When do you think we shall sail, Mr. O'Fleecethemall?"

"*O'Phlacemall!!* (spelling it). I should have thought, Sir, you'd a heard of that name before,

Digitized by Google

Sir; well known in Ireland, Sir!" and after giving me a long account of his pedigree, to which I paid but little attention, except what was repeated so often both then and afterwards, of his great grandfather being a "*rale gintleman*;" concluded by saying, he hoped to get away as soon as he *could*, of which I had not the slightest doubt, as I added, that exactly agrees with the notice on the *bill* at Rumkhove's. With a little attempt at flattery, he replied, that had he been previously aware, *who* was going as a passenger, and particularly a friend of his most worthy, honourable, undeniable, highly esteemed, and respected bosom friend, Mr. Rumkhove, he would have taken a more *select* set of passengers; however assuring him that I could make myself at home amongst any sort of people who might be coming, he *pretended* to have his mind a little more at ease.

He said, there were two people he had been fortunate in obtaining, as far as a crew was concerned, namely, Squaretoes for Captain, who was recommended to him by the amiable Rumkhove, and of whom every one spoke as being such a first rate seaman, and as for navigation, he could not be surpassed; the other was "Buzzknacker," the steward, who had saved him no end of trouble, having just given him the cash, and told him to expend it, as he best thought fit to add to the *comforts* of the passengers (? very like a whale.)

Leaving the wharf for a few hours, and returning

Digitized by Google

in the evening, I found affairs in a very different state, the unfortunate O'Phlacemall was jumping about the wharf in a most awful rage, abusing Capt. Squaretoes to his heart's content: he was a lubber, no sailor, more like a *soyer*, it was a great shame some law was not passed that owners could summarily punish such fellows as masters of vessels, for they (the poor owners) were now entirely in the hands of these men, losing anchors, carrying away hawsers, ropes, &c. and then taking it as coolly as if nothing had happened; "just now, Sir," he added, addressing me, "in hauling the vessel off from the wharf the hawser broke, and he of course lost the anchor."

"Most likely," said I, "if one was fast to it," (by way of consolation.)

"But he had no business to heave so hard, Sir, if he found it didn't come AISY; and then when I began to blow him up, he told me to put my head in a bag. You see, Sir, I'm a bit of a sailor."

"And only a *very* small bit, perhaps?" said I, looking over my shoulder at him.

"Ah, Sir! I see you're chaffing; but I came out all the way from Ireland, Sir, when I got put up to a thing or two on board, Sir."

Asking him if he learnt to be a sailor during that voyage alone, he gave me, as I expected, a whole account of himself and his voyage to and from California; (how the Yankees had repudiated a debt of 5000 dollars they owed him), "Sharp fellows those

Digitized by Google

Yankees, Sir, beat me hollow, Sir;" drawing him out a little more about seamanship, the following conversation took place between us.

"I've steered my *own* vessel, Sir, used to take the time by the chronometer, when the Captain (I mean the mate, for I used to be called Captain, *said in very low tones*), took the sights with the quadrant."

"Oh, then, you are acquainted with something of navigation, do you know anything of mathematics, Mr. O'P.?"

"Not at all, Sir, but I've *heard* a great lot about *him*; then you see, Sir, I've been aloft to reef topsails, and got all my nails jammed off."

"— By putting your fingers where you had no business," said I, interruptingly.

"Oh, dear no, Sir, but seeing one of the sailors come flying down by the topsail halliards, and knowing I was as *cliver a bye* as him, tried to do the same, but got hould of the wrong part, and found myself go *up* instead of down, and got my hand into the block."

"Ha, ha, ha, more fool you," said a *rowdy*, who happened to be standing close by, and listening to all the conversation, "if it hadn't been for your own thick skull, that anchor wouldn't ha' been where it is now, for as you would call yourself *captain*, when you ought to have been *cook*, and let go your anchor on top of another vessel's, it sarves you right, and arter all you're singing out afore you'r hurt much; when the tide turns, if you chooses to pay them

Digitized by Google

couple of boys there, they'll get your anchor with the boat."

At which Mr. O'P., laughing satirically, said, "How can they do that when there's eight fathoms water and the end of the hawser on the ground? ha, ha!"

"Why arn't there a buoy rope fast to it, and is'nt the buoy a watching there now?"

"The boys doing what?" (imagining he was talking about the boys stealing his anchor or something.)

"*Watching, I said.*"

"*Be dad* I forgot all about that;" and pretending to understand what was meant, said, "here my lad, get yourself a *nobbler*," offering the man half a crown.

"Go along wid you," says he, "d'ye think I came here to rob a poor miserable cove like you, for you must be one, or you wouldn't worship your *chink* so, but if you likes to come along with me to the 'White Hart' on the hill, I don't mind treating you to a glass of champagne," whereupon Mr. O'P. made a bolt of it, the whole of the people on the wharf bursting out laughing at him.

The vessel got round the first point, and anchored all safe for the night.

On the following morning, the wind having set in strong from the N.E., which was fair as soon as we could get outside the Heads, I embarked with another passenger about nine o'clock, and were soon

Digitized by Google

followed by the great O'P. and Captain Squaretoes, who was now in the owner's opinion everything that was amiable; coming out in fits and starts with, "splendid seaman;" "saved the anchor;" "nobody could have done it but him;" "clever fellow;" "one sixth of the passage money saved."

One of the passengers begging him to explain how, he commenced with, "Why d'ye see, Sir, a new anchor would have cost fifteen pounds, then each passenger paid six pounds, and there were fifteen passengers, it is a mere *rule of three* sum."

"A what?" says the passenger.

"Oh! simple rule of three; multiply the number of passengers by the number of pounds, and that"—(his friend interrupting,)

"Will bring the passengers into pounds."

At which poor Squaretoes, whose face had been gradually turning from red to blue, now burst out into a hearty laugh, and calling out to the "stooerrd" like the roaring of a lion, to bear a hand and give him a *little* drop of brandy, for having contained his laughter so long it had given him a violent pain in his inside. A doctor happening to be on board, I asked him immediately, if much worse results did not frequently occur from suppressing laughter, who of course said, yes, (seeing what was meant), and that any alcohol taken after it, was apt to cause instant death, with which Captain S. perfectly agreed, and for that reason took brandy INSTEAD, whereupon the whole cabin were in con-

Digitized by Google

vulsions, at which the old fellow himself joined most heartily, being totally ignorant of the cause.

Buzzknacker, the steward, had by this time arrived, and with his usual agility when jumping down the ladder, managed to alight on the toes of a digger, and backing into the pantry begged a thousand pardons, and getting blessed (?) by the digger, knocked his head against the carling and finished by upsetting the tray with three or four tumblers, wine glasses, &c. together with the bottle of brandy.

What would I not have given at this moment to have possessed the talent of the inimitable "George Cruikshank;" first of all, Mr. O'P.'s face white with rage, and almost foaming at the mouth, as he abused the steward, (whose praises he had sung so loudly the day before), with "you are a lazy, idle, careless, and good for nothing fellow, you lost me a number of passengers yesterday, through upsetting the bucket of water on to the head of Mr. Foureyes, you blackguard you have."

"If I'm a blackguard," said B., "its lucky I've got a companion."

"*His Greasiness*" the cook, putting his head down the hatchway at this moment, made loud inquiries as to when the steward intended to give him the *hunnions* to put in the "lob scouce," and the plums to *shuv* in the *duff*; looking round I caught the doctor's face, who, winking his eye, pointed over his neighbour's shoulder at poor old Squaretoes, who was looking in a most deplorable

Digitized by Google

state, seeing the mate swab up the brandy. Thinking it was now time to be off on deck and get some fresh air, for fear of getting the captain's complaint; I no sooner mounted the ladder than the great O'P. followed, to give me further account of the stories he had heard from some friend, who had got it from some acquaintance, &c. (following on the story of old) about this identical steward, at the same time pitying poor Captain Squaretoes, who he said had arrived at a time of life that required a little stimulant now and then; but somehow or other he had *mislaid* (?) the key, and didn't know how to get any more at present.

"War-na that the key as ye had on a guard this morning," said a canny Scot, who was enjoying a *draw* from a short black pipe.

O'P., turning first red and then white, said, "Oh, no, that was my watch key."

"Rather a queer watch," said the Scot, aside; "I never knew watches required the key to have *wards* in 'em before."

Leaning over the gangway, making a bargain for a basket of peaches, during the last conversation between the Scot and O'P., the latter thought I did not hear the remark made; so approaching me, remarked what fine looking *pa*iches I'd got; "Very," and told him to help himself. However, politely declining, he said he never eat fruit before dinner, for fear of spoiling his appetite.

"Dinner! why what time, in the name of con-

Digitized by Google

science, do you dine? I've only finished breakfast about an hour ago. But what time is it? you have a watch, I think you said?"

"O yes, Sir! but I left it at home."

"And you've brought away the key. Ha, ha, ha," laughed the Scotchman.

The great O'P. was not to be beat, however; for his wife's fitted his, he said, exactly. A long account was then given of the manner in which this wonderful ancient watch, had come into the possession of its present owner, having first been obtained by the "*raal* gintleman," his great grandfather, and descended by right to him.

His wife's watch was a Genava one.

At which I replied, it was strange, certainly, the same key should fit *both*.

The worthy Squaretoes having recovered without the brandy, now appeared on deck, and with an audible voice, summoned the boy Jack to loose the fore-topsail, which the mate repeated, at the same time helping him along with a box on the ear, and telling him to "*bear a hand*." The hands were called "up anchor;" having "brought to" rather near the shore, it was rather ticklish work getting under weigh, the wind blowing from the quarter it did, and no sooner was the anchor out of the ground, than away she went ashore on the point. I began to think the great O'P. would have gone mad altogether; as for Squaretoes, he was every thing but what he was a short time since.

Digitized by Google

"No sailor; he (O.P.) had heard he was not—The vessel on shore—Not insured—Property lost—Downright neglect." Then rushing forward to haul on the line they had run out to another vessel, the master of which kindly cut it, telling him to lay out another anchor, and not pull him ashore too. Away then the immortal O'P. ran aft, and seized hold of the tiller, when the Scotchman advised him to "tak care, or he might brak it."

Captain Squaretoes, after ordering that 2½ hauling line to be got up, and then to be paid down again, then the mainsail to be peaked, then lowered again, with sundry other *trifles*, which come under the denomination of *humbug*; commenced upon the great O. P.

"Was it he that called him no sailor? An old rag-seller like *him* to give an opinion?"

And after a long discussion upon seamanship, Mr. O'P. was satisfied that *when* there *was* water enough she *would* float; this was so tempting a *bait*, that I could not help saying, I sincerely hoped she would, but I had my doubts.

"Doubts!" exclaimed he, "why?"

"Because I think she'll fill and go down stern foremost, for I've been looking over her quarter, and she seems to be playing the devil's tattoo, against that sharp rock," which she certainly was.

The owner and skipper kept up a running fire all the evening until she got off, when it was made up as soon as the *key* was found, which of course had

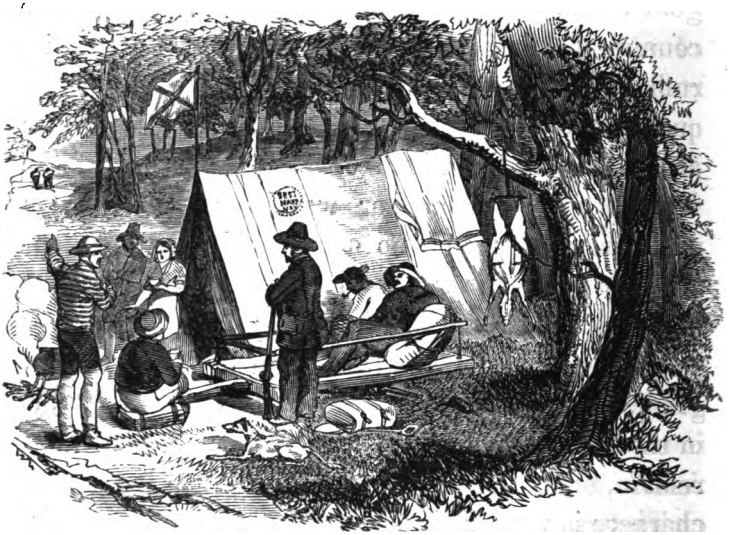
Digitized by Google

been left in the other waistcoat pocket. This dose of squabbling was repeated daily, but the parties generally were reconciled at night.

In the course of nine days, I was delighted once more to hear the chain cable running out of the hawse, when the anchor was let go in Hobson Bay, Victoria; and no sooner did any boat approach, than *news* was most earnestly sought about the diggings; some said it was no use going to get gold, for if you did, you were sure of being robbed; others again, said, "that those *as was* bailed up, it sarved em right, for letting people know what they had."

There is very little doubt that this argument is, in a great measure, true,—people, who have never known what it is to have a hundred pounds, or even a hundred shillings, when they became possessed of thousands in such an extraordinary sudden manner, cannot help telling every one on the road of it, particularly if they meet at a coffee shop, alias a sly grog shop; or, instead of sending it down by the escort, convey it about their own person, when they very frequently get stuck up, and if not killed, are disfigured for life, or perhaps left to die, unless some passing Samaritan lets them loose; but I have known even some of these people afraid to do anything of the kind, for fear there might be some one hid in the forest, who would *mark* them, and afterwards murder them. Such was the state of fear that I found existing, when subsequently

Digitized by Google



Coffee—*alias* Sly Grog Tent.

becoming a Commissioner, that people dare not come forward to give evidence, even had they seen others murdered, lest they should themselves fall victims; consequently ruffians being well aware this feeling existed, committed all sorts of depredations; and I believe, no police that ever were organised, would be able to put an immediate stop to it.

The Melbourne Argus (being the principal paper read by the people) attributed the *entire* blame to the Government, and, I am inclined to think, too readily published anything that any person chose to write; although, no doubt there was a great deal of truth in some things it said, with respect to the discipline of the Police, &c., for I subsequently could not help observing it at the diggings; at the same time, was

Digitized by Google

gold ever discovered in any country, without that country being soon overrun with all sorts of ruffians? and, perhaps, in Victoria, from the great quantity of gold there found, together with its proximity to Van Diemen's Land, which is too well known, as being the receptacle of the most villanous of villains, made it 10,000 times worse, and the more difficult, for the most able men to devise any scheme, for the better safety of society; people became so independent, that almost every grade of society rushed to see what they could get in the scramble; the police, like others, would not remain, or those that did, were some of the worst of characters, old associates with these very ruffians from Van Diemen's Land; and who were not beyond *taking tip*, which they found *pay* better than taking them into custody; to say, when mentioning this subject, that I include all the police would be too sweeping a clause; but from the numbers that left the force at the diggings with a thousand or more pounds in their pockets, accumulated in six months, it must be pretty evident, that they did not obtain it by fair means.

The intention I have in writing this book, is not for the purpose of supporting any ONE side more than another, but to state what my impressions were, when *hearing* or *seeing* anything, leaving it to others to form their own opinions; arguing from experience I can state that I never heard of any body of men being in a bad state of discipline, no

Digitized by Google

matter in what service they were, without the remark being universally made, that it was more from the want of tact and management on the part of superiors, than otherwise, I therefore cannot exclude police from this general opinion: there was, at the Mount, too much favouritism, courting popularity, &c., together with the want of energy and unanimity, also petty jealousies existing between the different branches of the same service (or part and parcel of the same), together with the absence of firmness and decision in some of the officers, that rendered those who did join and *were* anxious to do their duty, subject to the grossest insolence and abuse by the men. However, that time, I trust, is gone by, and the appointment of the present Chief Commissioner of Police and some of his subordinates, seems to be so universally approved, that it is to be hoped the old system will be knocked on the head, and render the force what it ought to be, namely, Protectors of the Public.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

THREE NIGHTS' LODGING—NINE SLEEPING IN ONE ROOM—CHARGES ON WHARFS—PIGEONS OF MR. MOSHESH—HUMBERELLERS—RECKLESS SQUANDERING OF MONEY—A LOVELY INTENDED—HER LOVER—THE BRIDE A QUADRUPED—DIGGERS WEDDINGS—RT. HON. SIDNEY HERBERT'S PLAN OF EMIGRATION—EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE—A GOOD EXAMPLE—REVERSES OF FORTUNE—PROMOTERS OF FEMALE EMIGRATION—LUDICROUS SUBJECT—COLONIAL HUMBUGS—FOLLY OF SOME PARTIES EMIGRATING—GOOD AND BAD SUBJECTS—EXCELLENCE OF MR. S. HERBERT'S PLAN—A YOUNG GENTLEMAN "DIGGER"—BUSH RANGERS—CONSIDERATIONS FOR FATHERS—PEOPLE BROUGHT UP TO BE COLONISTS—ONE OF THE DELUDED—A MANCHESTER MAN AT FAULT.

On the following morning we again got under weigh, and were taken in tow by a steamer, which took us up the river Yarra-Yarra, and in a couple of hours arrived at the wharf, when I once more landed in Melbourne, which certainly presented a different appearance from what I had seen in 1838, boasting now of some fine buildings, both of stone and brick, the streets are all at right angles to one another, but only every *other* one is wide, consequently the narrow ones that intervene, are inhabited by all the thieves, murderers, and abandoned women in the place. These small streets were, I believe, made subsequently to the original plan being laid before the public, too great an area being given for each

Digitized by Google

allotment, and no way of getting in the rear of their premises or stables by a back entrance, also from the ground becoming so valuable, it was altered by making these small streets.

Certainly, when in Sydney, I thought all appeared bustle and excitement, but when I landed in "Melbourne," it was not to be compared to it; some idea may however be formed by the following (though perhaps meagre) description of the place.

Being unsuccessful in finding out where my friend resided, my next endeavour was to seek after a lodging. For the first night, two other passengers and myself, managed to get a bed at a tavern, but could only be promised it for that night; the following evening we got squeezed into a board and lodging house, amongst a fine mixture of people, nearly all wealthy men, who were preparing to start again for the diggings, so soon as the rain set in. From the accounts of the sufferings at the diggings, through want of water, sandy blight, dysentery, &c. and having only just recovered from both of these complaints, I did not feel quite up to trying my luck again just yet, therefore left my two companions to pursue their way to El Dorado.

I was obliged to leave the house we were in, though the people promised to take charge of my trunks,* until I could get a place to put them in; but for the next *three* nights I never had my clothes

* If there is one greater nuisance than another, it is landing in a colony with chests of clothes, and not knowing where to put them.

Digitized by Google

off, and in no house of any sort, could I get permission, for love or money, to sleep on the *floor*, or even sit in a *chair*, and was not sorry to meet an old shipmate, who kindly gave me a *shake down*, rough as it was, in the fore-peak of a vessel lying alongside the wharf. Being pretty well accustomed to sleep on a fern bed in the open air in New Zealand, camping out was nothing new to me, so taking a blanket, I slept the second night near a fire on the south side of the Yarra, amongst a number of tents, and the third night a "new arrival" let me sleep under his tent. Our conversation was all about the diggings, the town, the set of ruffians that were in it, &c., and as he said, "I would not have a room, or be compelled to sleep in the same house with some of those fellows, for any money, I should be afraid of having my throat cut." He also related stories about strangling, by screwing up men's handkerchiefs round their necks,* and spoke of the armed wretches who haunted the streets at night, &c., so that it was dangerous to go out. I imagine my friend was of rather a nervous temperament, and one whom it would not take much to frighten; and in order to allay his anxiety, I mentioned my walking the streets until a late hour, but with the exception of drunken rows, which were to be expected, I had never seen any further disturbance.

The following day I managed to get a lodging, but there were *eight* others sleeping in the same room. However, having long since made up my

* Garrotting.

Digitized by Google

mind, when going "gold digging," to put up with everything, I made a bargain of two guineas and a half for a week, and as the people of the place were civil, which was not commonly the case with this class, I did not much mind, for I amused myself during the day with seeing what was to be seen.

The numbers of vessels, both under canvas and steam, that were arriving every day from almost all parts of the world, full of every sort of passenger, both biped and quadruped, besides other cargo, made the wharf in one continued state of excitement; some parties might be seen with a box too heavy to get out of a vessel by themselves, and would get men to help, whom they paid readily a couple of shillings, which was the usual charge for about as many minutes work, and that was only to get it on shore, placing it on a dray was another shilling, and when so placed, the driver would ask ten more for taking it a quarter of a mile.

Seeing parties go into shops, apparently with more money than brains, I occasionally followed them (and would buy some small article as an excuse), just to see in what manner they laid their money out, &c.

Upon one occasion I followed a party into the shop of a Jew, consisting of an old man, (who had been indulging in Bacchus to a considerable extent), his wife and two little girls about ten or twelve years of age, who had neither shoe nor stocking on, and altogether filthily dirty; there was an excuse for the old man, as he had only just returned from the dig-

Digitized by Google

gings. It was a treat to see *Moshesh's* countenance beam with the delight it did, when he jumped over the counter and rushed up to his dearly beloved old friend, (?) whom he was so happy to see once more, congratulating him upon the success which he had *heard* (Qy. had he ever seen him before?) that he had at the digg*inshe*; "Why, Sir, (he continued inquiringly) I understand that you made"—

Old Man. "Five hun *(hiccup)* dred ounces *(hic)* in"—

Mos. (*unable to contain himself*). "Oh mine Got, mine Got!"

Old Man. (hiccup) "In three weeks."

Mos. "I'm really delighted (no doubt) to hear of such gentlemensh as you getting the gold, for you spend it like gentlemensh, and don't hoard it up to look at, like a lot of fools."

The old man here thinking the Jew had called him a fool, being ignorant of all the rest of his humbug, was very anxious to fight him for all the shop was worth, but at last got persuaded Moshesh was paying him a high compliment, whereupon he said, "Lots a money, lad, *(hic)* lots a gold, *(hic)* lots more where *(hic)* that came from, and *(hic)* when it's all gone *(hic)*, here's the cove as *(hic)* can go and dig more, and no gammon, you old *thief*."

This polite expression was received with the greatest good humour by Moshesh, who said he

Digitized by Google

had too great a regard for his dear old friend, to be offended with him; after this, a few *compliments* were passed between husband and wife, which were of such an *elegant* (?) nature that I must beg to be excused repeating them, suffice it to say, that he was very anxious to know when she was going to commence buying things, for when she had done, he intended to begin, and with those ideas Mr. Moshesh entirely agreed, as being the *correct* thing.

The *lady* (bearing in mind, I presume, the old saying "that charity begins at home,") commenced with buying every article that ever could be invented for female attire, or that Moshesh could possibly think *becoming:* the old man, (who had been accommodated with an arm chair for fear he should tumble off one without arms,) crying out every now and then, "give the old *faggot* plenty, for she might not have the chance again," until at last her ideas of personal vanity were gratified; the "young ladish" as the Jew termed them, had now to be fitted out; velvet and white silk bonnets, leghorn hats, with ostrich feathers, and every other description of article for use or ornament were handed down for inspection.

Papa, hearing the word "parasol" mentioned; wished particularly to be informed what "them things was?"

"Why, you old fool," said his amiable better half, "did not you never see those little *humberellers* as all ladies *wears* to keep the sun off their heads."

Digitized by Google

Papa disagreed and said, "them was *Wales*," and would not be persuaded until he was shewn one and the other, when, he perfectly coincided with them that he was wrong, and by his own desire, particularly wished Mr. M. would "give *(hic)* 'em plenty, give 'em *(hic)* plenty. And the same story was repeated with everything; silk stockings, silk and kid gloves, &c. &c. At this stage of the proceedings I was compelled to take up my hat, unless I might be *told* to take myself off, having caught the eye of a juvenile Moshesh, who was watching me like a cat would a mouse, whilst endeavouring with a pencil to take off the group; but from what I observed, expect that Mr. M. made a considerable hole in the old man's gold bag.

The scenes in the larger shops (which might come under the denomination of the "Swan and Edgar, Howell and James, Gunter, &c., of Melbourne,") were ludicrous to a degree; nothing seemed to be sufficiently expensive, and in some instances, when objected to, on account of the low price, the shopman, as a matter of course, had far more superior articles inside, only imagined (?) they did not require the very best: a juvenile was then immediately dispatched to bring some from the last case, &c. which being handed down and accompanied by a little small talk, the purchasers were persuaded must be better; how could it be otherwise, when the first roll of velvet was only 18*s.* per yard, and this was 30*s.*?—though the extra price had been added

Digitized by Google

in consequence only of the trouble caused, from the goods having to be carried from one part of the shop to another, rolled up again, pinned, and returned, care having been taken in the mean time to keep the purchaser's eyes directed in the opposite direction by the display of some other *splendid* articles just arrived from England.

A LADY, one day, entered one of these shops when I happened to be there, and endeavouring to assume an innocent and effeminate manner, whispered across the counter that she was going to be married, her face at this time was covered with a thick veil, making it rather difficult to find out whether she was young or old, black or white, handsome or ugly, at all events no doubt existed in the mind of the shopman that she must be like all other ladies about to become brides, "lovely and accomplished," (when was it known to be otherwise?) He made a most profound bow, accompanying it with all the congratulations imaginable, wishing her every happiness, and inquired who could be the happy man that had won the affections of such an amiable, lovely picture of youth, virtue, and beauty? Her only answer was, that he was a very *nice young man*, and had given her £100 to *sport* on her wedding dress.

A large assortment of *splendid* white bonnets, which one would imagine had come from the market gardeners very lately, from the profusion of flowers of every colour, with ribbons to match, were soon produced; the shopman begged to inform this

Digitized by Google

amiable creature that "orange flowers" had quite gone out of fashion amongst ladies of rank and wealth, consequently would not presume to shew her anything that was not fashionable; at last one was fixed upon, having an enormous *bunch* (for it could not be called anything else) made of ribbons, resembling a red cabbage, on one side; just at this moment who should enter but her intended husband, accompanied by two or three others, (the whole lot well primed with the charms of Bacchus,) and from whom there came a strong perfume of rum and tobacco. The lover, giving his intended a smack on the back, wanted to know, how much longer the old lass was going to be a rigging of herself out, and getting her new toggery on, for there was a dozen of champagne waiting to be *sweated* out, before they took a drive in the carriage, so she must bear a hand about it.

The *Lady* now for the first time lifted her veil, seeming however to forget herself, for she instantly let it drop again, but it was quite long enough to let people examine this splendid specimen of *beauty* and *virtue*; a nose something resembling the red ball on a billiard table was fixed on a face deeply pitted with small pox, and squinting out of a pair of eyes the colour of a ferret's; a more abominable looking creature in the shape of a female I never saw. Her intended husband, an athletic, powerful young man, about twenty-five years of age, was one of the many who may be seen and heard of, having come possessed of wealth which they never ex-

Digitized by Google

pected, make themselves, through their own stupidity, miserable all their lives, whereas, had they reflected for an instant, might never have known what it was to have one moment of anxiety, or anything whatever to prevent their being the happiest of the happy.

The *gentleman* perfectly agreed in the choice of the bonnet, only thought it required another *bunch* of ribbons on the other side, otherwise she'd look like a *donkey* with only one ear, and all "lop sided." To this the shopman acquiesced, merely stating that would only make it one guinea more, which was, of course, a mere nothing.

Fortunately amongst the humbler classes, *all are* not so ignorant, thousands repair to their homes in various parts of the Colonies, and lay out their money to advantage, and no place, as far as I could hear, beat either Adelaide, or New Zealand; it may be asked, why do people go to Adelaide, instead of remaining in Victoria, after acquiring a degree of wealth? Simply, from the reason which every one gave, that in South Australia they could obtain their ninety or more acres of ground where they liked, and have what they could call a home, cultivate their land, &c.; but this cannot be done in Victoria, because the whole country is in the hands of squatters for depasturing sheep and cattle, therefore the gold that the colony produces, goes away to benefit other places; certainly the squatters were originally, the pioneers of the colony, and had all the

Digitized by Google

brunt to bear at first, for which reason, it must be admitted, a great deal of consideration is required, as it might entail the ruin of thousands, if the system were altered immediately; at the same time, it cannot, I imagine, be denied that the Colony would retain a considerable quantity more gold within its own precincts, if another system were adopted, and the land sold as long as purchasers could be found.

All parties with whom I conversed, particularly agriculturists, labourers, &c. who had come from New Zealand, intended returning to that colony, so soon as they obtained sufficient to *start upon*; the *extremely* healthy climate, productive nature of the soil, and facility of obtaining land, (provided people have money,) are considerations to persons in search of *comfortable* homes. The only settlement I heard abused was Canterbury, N.Z., and to which few seemed inclined to return. Van Diemen's Land, and many parts of New South Wales seemed to be far more preferred than Victoria, the former place and New Zealand are about on a par as regards climate and cultivation.*

Wedding parties without end drive up and down the streets, by way of "cutting a flash" (as it is termed), all day long, and a clergyman informed me

* Should this book meet with any degree of success, or be appreciated by those who do me the honour of subscribing, I shall be encouraged to lay before them, at a future period, "What I *saw, heard,* and *did,* or *Eighteen Months in New Zealand,*" together with its *future* prospects; consequently further mention of that Colony in this instance may be considered out of place.

Digitized by Google

he had since found out, that by way of getting rid of their hard earned gold, some parties went and got married at *both* churches on different days, in order to have the *spree* over again.

A volume might almost be written on the ridiculous manner in which this class of people squander away their money; many, I have heard boasting at the diggings, as to the shortness of time in which they could "*knock down*" a thousand or two pounds, and return to the diggings, without sufficient to buy a pickaxe. For such people there is no pity if they never get another ounce; these characters being generally of the *Rowdy* description, are consequently, not particular, whether they become bushrangers, or anything else; there are others again industrious, hard-working people, who go perhaps for months, and never light upon a lucky spot, returning worse than they went.

Having mentioned some of the ridiculous, or unfortunate cases, I will now relate one or two the other way, not that they are singular by any means, only I have selected them as examples. Many, if not all of my readers, must be aware of the plan adopted by the Right Honourable Sidney Herbert, for sending out females, (generally called distressed needle women,) to the different colonies, which plan is so ably supported, and kindly contributed to, by ladies of all ranks, and other philanthropic people, several of whose names are now spread far and wide at the Antipodes, and are perfectly idolized by those poor creatures, from the kind advice they

Digitized by Google

received from them previous to starting—as one of them said to me—(who, with her husband had pitched their tent near to my camp for safety, in consequence of being the Commissioner at an out-station), when bringing over a bag of gold, making the *third* of *fifteen* pounds *weight* that I had put in my valise, and deposited at the Gold Office for transmission by escort to the Treasury in Melbourne—"Ah, sir! I only wish those kind creatures, Lady ——, or Mrs. ——, whom I call angels on earth, could only see me now; heaven only can reward them; still I hope, if it pleases God to spare my life, before another year or two passes, to express my gratitude by giving them the best *nugget* my husband gets, and deliver it with my own hands, God bless 'em!" Mentioning that I knew perfectly well who both the ladies were; she said, she hoped that if I went to England I would not forget to tell them; having, however, at the time, as much idea of returning to England, as I had of visiting the man in the moon, I never thought of asking her maiden name.

This system (although like many other philanthropic measures, repeatedly abused,) is, I consider, one of the best and most charitable methods of sending out female emigrants. Those who really are industrious, and good work people, are sure of obtaining at all events, a better livelihood than at home; having during my wanderings in all the colonies, asked young bachelors jokingly why they did not marry, when they were comparatively well off, the reply was that *good* wives were scarce

Digitized by Google

to find; most of the *girls*, they said, liking flash dresses better than making butter and cheese.

The Northumberland, Capt. McKerlie, belonging to Messrs. Green, of Blackwall, took out a number of these girls in 1851, one of whom, about 17 years of age, was not many weeks on shore ere she captivated the heart of a young and lucky gold digger, who had the management of a sheep, or cattle station, previous to going gold digging, where he cleared upwards of £2000; after coming back and exchanging his gold for cash, which he placed in the bank, he returned to his old place to assist at the shearing. Some short time after, he met the girl and subsequently married her, making her a present of £300 to *sport* on herself, &c. This girl, I was told, instead of spending the money to gratify her own vanity, obtained all that was useful, and placed the remainder of the money to her husband's credit, until an opportunity should offer for good investment. Both afterwards went up to the station; the owner, was extremely glad to hear of the overseer's being married, and more particularly that his wife possessed such good sense; doubtless the poor girl's sufferings in adversity, had taught her a lesson, and how thankful she ought to be when prosperity came; and I hope this example may not be unheeded by those whose ears it may reach, who are emigrating under the same patronage.

This is, perhaps, an instance of a poor girl who was thrown on her own hands, either by the poverty or cold heartedness of her parents, or perhaps being

Digitized by Google

left an orphan, had from the state of her poverty, been nearly compelled to follow a life of infamy and disgrace to obtain bread; however, it was not ordained that such should be her doom, before her fate was sealed, the fearful accounts which were continually appearing in the newspapers, had opened the eyes of the higher classes of society, more particularly ladies, whose indignation could not help being aroused; when, as noble and high-minded Christians, they took into consideration what steps ought to be attempted, to remedy this growing evil, and prevent these poor girls from becoming the victim of the common destroyer. The subject being taken in hand by the Right Hon. Gentleman now Secretary at War, the present system of emigration was adopted; thus this girl was saved from everlasting misery, and is now the wife of a comparatively wealthy man, and who can tell that this happy couple may not, in the course of time, be *millionaires*; it would not be a solitary instance, for there are hundreds of people in the colonies, who commenced as shepherds, and are now worth their *thousands* a year; what then must be the feelings of those ladies or gentlemen, when the news should reach their ears, that one, (if *only* one) had been saved from a wretched existence, and that it was through their aid, that she was afforded an opportunity, of establishing herself as an industrious member of society. Almighty God, with his bountiful goodness, shewed her a path in a new country, and possessed her with a mind capable of resisting the vanities and conceits

Digitized by Google

of this world, which she followed; and, ere death closes the scene, success may enable her to assist those who are in the position she once was. I feel confident I shall not be accused of assuming an air of presumption, in asserting that nothing must be more gratifying to the feelings of those who supported this system, when they hear of its good results. There are perhaps no class of people who deserve more universal sympathy than the class I now allude to, viz. "distressed needle women," many of whom are extremely respectable people, but from misfortune have been compelled to seek their livelihood in this manner. Impressed with this conviction I have been induced to publish in "What I've seen, heard, and done" during my sojourn in "Austral's Golden East," one or two of the good results which have transpired (or, at all events, that came to my knowledge) from this system of female emigration, hoping it may induce the philanthropic, not to discontinue their support to so good a measure, and enable the promoters *partially* to assist such females as wish to adopt the antipodean colonies for their future home, should they (the Committee) consider the candidates deserving objects.

A rather ludicrous circumstance occurred somewhat in connection with the case in point, which I imagine a lady now in this country will recognize as having happened to herself; this lady was coming home to England about a year ago, and had engaged a servant girl to accompany her: a day or two previous to the vessel's sailing, this girl wishing

Digitized by Google

particularly to talk to her mistress, said, that her acquaintances and friends had told her she was doing a most foolish thing in returning home, on account of so many young and rich gold diggers coming down every day from Mount Alexander wanting *wives*, and giving them such lots of money to *sport*, and that she herself had taken it into consideration, and thought she was throwing away such an opportunity, that might never fall to her lot again, and begged to decline going to England. The request was of course acceded to, and caused, as may be supposed, a good deal of amusement to those who subsequently heard it.

It may possibly be imagined that I am wishing to encourage female emigration to any extent, and make people believe that as soon as they arrive in the Colony, there is a home for them at once, and that folks will run after them offering good wages as servants, or high salaries as governesses, &c. without any recommendations, or letters of introduction to some one in the place; and that they can obtain lodging, &c. the same as in London; or, if so inclined, *good* husbands as well: such ideas I *entirely* differ from; and people, I fear have been swarming out to the Colonies on account of hearing such glowing reports of *individuals*, but the *successes* only of these individuals are mentioned, the *misfortunes* and *disappointments* of hundreds are scarcely ever uttered, and those repeating them are told, "they are not *well-wishers* of the Colony." But, who are the people who assert this? Are they

Digitized by Google

really *at heart* well-wishers to the Colony, and desirous of benefitting those going out; or is it from having a number of houses, town allotments, &c., which the great influx of population must cause to rise almost to a fictitious value? I have no hesitation in answering that the latter reason generally predominates; those people who hold out encouragement to EVERY individual, that they are sure to do well, that it is the land flowing with milk and honey, without ever enquiring, "what either he, or she has been accustomed to; what they intend to do; whether they are single or married, and have families, or what means they have (should they have families) to provide for them on their arrival;" I cannot but consider those who do advise in this manner are a selfish, greedy, parsimonious set of people, possessing neither heart nor mind, who are enjoying themselves in England, and fear that should they tell the truth to parties consulting them (whom they know, as well as I do, are not fit for a colonial life at *any* time, much more during such times as these) it will cause *alarm!* stop emigration! the value of their property will fall, and they will be abused by some of their *friends* in the Colony, for ever having *hinted* at there being anything but *success* attending every one who goes out.

Neither will the generality of my readers, I trust, suppose that I wish to *dis*courage emigration, for that is not at all my desire, but my wish is simply to prevent people who are doing comparatively well

Digitized by Google

here, from being deluded into emigrating upon the *chance* of making a fortune; and those who *never* did well anywhere, may rely upon it, unless they wish to follow "Jack Rattle," they had better remain at home.

To those who have friends in the Colonies, I say, go by all means, if you think of bettering yourselves, they can perhaps find something to do, or provide for you whilst you look about; but having both heard of, and seen, numbers of respectable people of both sexes, I allude more particularly to females, who go out hoping to better their condition in life, without any one to look up to as a protector, or to use any influence in obtaining a situation, or caring one straw what becomes of them; I ask, what *can* such people expect? The Colony at the present time, prevents the generality of settlers from being able to say "*I am happy to see you;*" the prices of everything are too high, and people with *fixed* salaries, or having families to support, are not in a position to entertain their friends, however willing they might be.

Every day do people somehow or other find me out, and make enquiries respecting emigration; some saying they had seen a Mr. So-and-so,* who had told them this, that, and the other, and various letters they had seen, &c.: a respectable man and his wife (whose father is a retired farmer), having a *large* family, are amongst the number who have sought my advice; upon enquiry I found that by

* People whose names are not at all *strange* to me.

Digitized by Google

the time they landed, it was just possible they might have twenty pounds amongst the lot; from appearances I should judge he would be classed amongst the "*ne'er do wells*," being a sort of "Jack of all trades, master of none," having partially studied for the professions of Law, Physic, and Divinity, but, getting sick of them all, preferred living on his friends, or those of his wife, to doing anything in the way of benefitting himself: I gave him sufficient *hints*, and told his father-in-law outright, that, should he not possess energy, the chances are he'll starve; and the idea of people with large families going out, with nothing scarcely to live upon when they arrive, or who have never been accustomed to manual labour of any kind, is absolute madness, and downright *cruelty*, on the part of those who encourage them.

Several have applied to me under very different auspices, and amongst them an old servant to one of my relatives: his story was, that he had got a little money, but only a little, having however an industrious wife who made a good living by washing, it helped supporting the children. His questions were to know whether, if he went out by *himself*, he would have any chance of work, for at present, being a *married* man, no one would engage him as a servant, and he saw nothing but the workhouse staring him in the face; and should he succeed in finding employment, then his wife and children could follow. My answer was (knowing him to be a hard-working, honest, industrious steady man), most

Digitized by Google

decidedly, feeling confident that he will do well: on landing, he will not be entirely penniless, and is one of those who can turn his hand to anything, either attending at table, milking a cow, grooming a horse, handling the shears, cooking, or any other handy work,—such a person need never fear. Innumerable other cases I could mention, but do not think they are required.

Females who go out as Government emigrants, or under Mr. Sidney Herbert's plan, are lodged in an establishment for the purpose, and an advertisement by the immigration agent, announces the day they can be hired as servants. These people have protection at once when they land; but it only requires the perusal of the Melbourne papers of a few months back, to be made acquainted with the pitiable scenes that daily presented themselves, of young mothers with infants at their breasts, not being able to crawl in anywhere, and almost starved to death, having gone out without tent, or covering of any sort but their clothes, and not a lodging to be obtained, had they even the money to pay for it; hundreds were exposing their *all* for sale, instead of bothering themselves with a quantity of clothes and furniture of every description, which would cost more being stored for a time, than the things were worth. It is one of the greatest mistakes imaginable of people who are going out, perhaps without any prospect of living, except in a tent, to bother themselves with the quantity of clothes they sometimes have; I do not thereby mean that emigrants should go to the other

Digitized by Google

extremity, and take *none at all;* but not like a young gentleman I saw landing, with about two cart loads of chests, trunks, portmanteaus, carpet bags, packing cases, &c., and on asking him what he was going to do, he said, "Oh! I've come out to *dig,*" I, of course, imagined that these cases contained implements, &c., but when he said that they were only a *few* clothes, I advised him immediately to hold an auction; however, found it was labour in vain attempting to persuade him they would be of no use at the diggings.

Before closing the subject of emigration, I must mention one thing with respect to the sons of gentlemen, who are now being poured into the Australian colonies by shoals; some, doubtless, are sent from the best motives; fathers thinking their sons, (boys of eighteen and twenty) being fine, strong, healthy lads, will be able in the scramble to rub through, and, *perhaps,* make a fortune; these boys, very likely, have read the accounts of the hundredweights of gold being found, and imagine they are as plentiful as landscape agates at Brighton, and as a good excuse to get away from school, beg and pray of their fathers to let them go: out they do go and what becomes of them? Having a little money at first, what is not spent whilst in town is applied towards an outfit for the diggings, or, what remains they carry with them; reaching the "black forest" in a day or two, and enquiring of the man to whom the dray belongs, why it was so called, get for answer, that "he did not know exactly, but believed

Digitized by Google

it was on account of fellows committing so many black deeds there." Black deeds? they would ask; murders I suppose. "Oh, yes! sometimes outright, or else they would only leave 'em as good as dead; bale fellows up with their hands behind a tree, and after pounding them about the eyes with a life preserver, and robbing them of all the cash they had,

("I say, Jem, is them mounted traps?"—"No fear, Bob, they never *w*entures this fur from home.")

leaves 'em to die;" perhaps before the words were well out of his mouth, a gang of ruffians pounce down and serve them in that manner. Escaping with their lives, for which they are thankful, but what is their fate to be? no money, no friends in the country; one takes one way, another takes another, accepting any situation to obtain their food,

Digitized by Google

and perhaps arriving at some station where there may be one of the rough sort, only get jeered and told, that their *yarn* is rather too stale; they are however thankful for a time at being allowed to work for their food; a circumstance resembling this I know to have occurred only a few days before I left.

I will here cite a few instances, out of many that came under my personal knowledge, of young men who were forced (some through misfortune, others through folly and idleness) to adopt the following menial occupations in order to obtain a subsistence.

The son of a nobleman	A private in the police.
A late officer in H.E.I.C.	Ditto.
The son of a clergyman	A shepherd at £25 per annum.
A person possessing a very aristocratic name, who has been many years in the colony, and is well known,* was reduced to	A barman at a public.
A very respectable man, at one time a large farmer, and who four years ago became a shipowner, thinking that ploughing the main was more profitable than the land, and getting picked up by a cunning schemer, was, last November,	Fitting himself out again as a *dêrnier rêsort*, to try and retrieve himself at the diggings.

* This person was stated by good authority, to have held at one time a commission in the Life Guards.

Digitized by Google

A fellow passenger of my own, who once held a respectable position in the City, where he was unfortunate, and similar misfortunes occurring to him in the Colony, was, when I left Melbourne,	Porter to a wholesale grocer.

I could almost fill a volume were I to narrate the numbers I have met in my travels, during the last three years and a half, of gentlemen's sons holding such situations as hut keepers, stock men, water men, horse keepers, cow boys, and labourers carrying a hod of bricks up a ladder.

Perhaps it might do some of those gentlemen a deal of good (whom "Punch" ludicrously designates as "the rising generation"), being subjected to a little hardship; but those fathers who do not wish their sons to go headlong to ruin, will either supply them with something to *start* upon, or keep them at home, except they wish them no better places than such as I have mentioned. Young men who go out to become settlers, and want to learn sheep farming, &c. must set to work and not be particular, learning everything connected with it, not fancying themselves too good for anything, *provided* it is useful; nobody will blame them for doing that, particularly if they are not possessed of a large capital; they will gain more credit than otherwise, and those who are wealthy, seeing they are exerting themselves, are much more likely to lend them assistance.

Digitized by Google

Those who have been educated with the idea of colonizing, be they men or women, no place could present a better field than New Holland, Van Diemen's Land, and New Zealand, others however who have been brought up with the idea that they never would have anything to do, but spend money, had much better remain where they are; men also in the capacity of merchants' or bankers' clerks, &c. notwithstanding they may be industrious, and even have the best letters as to character, and integrity, will, I imagine, be woefully disappointed at being told by their friends, when they arrive, (who may perhaps wish to serve them if they could) that it is quite out of their power to do anything at present, having so many friends lately come out, bringing the highest recommendations; besides, they may be told that *colonial* experience is required.

Happening one day, last November, to go into an hotel to see a gentleman, I observed a number of people were all talking away upon various subjects connected with the colony; amongst them was a passenger by the Great Britain, who was wishing himself back again in Manchester, where, he said, he held an excellent situation, with a good salary and everything to make him comfortable, still seeing such wonderful reports in the papers about the high salaries that were given, both in the government offices and merchants' counting-houses, &c., besides the certainty (as he understood) of any one making a fortune who went to the diggings, and being determined to try his luck, gave up his situation,

Digitized by Google

and came out in the before-mentioned Leviathan steamer, thinking, that if the worst came to the worst, the number of letters he had to people in the first houses in the colony, besides others to government officers, including one to his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, that he was sure of getting employment, considering he understood book-keeping, both by double and single entry, &c. as well as having been a salesman, traveller, &c. &c. for a large firm of manufacturers; on presenting his letters, he obtained for answer almost what I have repeated. People seem to imagine that if they obtain for their friends a letter of introduction to the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor of a colony, that they have nothing more to bother their heads about, but just to go out and instantly be placed in a lucrative situation, as if the Governors had nothing else to do, but just making nice snug berths for all the people who go out with letters of introduction. This person, who was evidently a clever, business-like looking man, said he had heard that his Excellency had had nearly *seven hundred* applications from people who had lately arrived, wanting employment, so what was the use of bothering him; he also jokingly said, that he had always thought Manchester people were as sharp as razors, but he understood that colonial experience required to have a much keener edge, otherwise they would not cut at all.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

PRISONERS AND POLICE—POLICE INFALLIBLE—COUNTRY LODGINGS—ROBBERY ON BOARD THE NELSON—BAD ACCOUNTS FROM THE DIGGINGS—APPOINTMENT AS COMMISSIONER—THROWN FROM MY HORSE—BAD STATE OF THE ROADS—ARRIVE AT CAIRNHILL—ENTER THE BLACK FOREST—MEET A "MORAL" POSTMAN—HIS IDEAS OF A COMMISSIONER'S DUTY—HOW TO TIP THE SCALES—BLINDING THE TRAPS—POSTMAN'S OPINION OF OFFICIALS—A SWELLISH COVE—UNINTELLIGIBLE LANGUAGE—FIVE MILE CREEK—CARLSHRUE—THE SWELL—MR. SWYNDEL-DHYGGA—GOLD BUYER—SWELL CONVERTED INTO A COUNT—MR. CHEATEMALL—BLAZES, THE WAITER—ARRIVAL AT COMMISSIONER'S CAMP—CAPTAIN BLAMIRE—OFFICERS OF GOLD COMMISSION—SALARIES.

REMAINING a few days longer in Melbourne, and seeing in the papers so repeatedly about the manner in which people were robbed in the streets, by ruffians levelling their pistols and demanding "money or your life," I was rather anxious to hear some of these cases, and to see the perpetrators of such deeds, therefore paid a visit to the Police once or twice by way of curiosity.

The first case that came on, or rather was going on, when I entered, was a person charged by the police as being either drunk or creating a disturbance in the streets at eight o'clock the previous

Digitized by Google

evening; there was something evidently in the prisoner's countenance denoting respectability, but he was, as might be supposed, in rather a filthy state, from having been knocked down, kicked, and lodged for the night in the lock-up, amongst, I have no doubt, a motley group; one or two policemen swore that after a deal of trouble they at last succeeded in taking him into custody; that he was endeavouring to excite the mob, &c.

Watching most particularly these men as they gave their evidence, I never in my life saw countenances so clearly indicating they were perjuring themselves (if it is to be allowed that *truth* or *falsehood* can be read in any one's physiognomy). What was this man's defence? He said, he had but a short time since landed from England, was the brother of a celebrated author, and had come out expressly to collect material, &c. for the purpose of his brother's publishing a work on Australia; the previous evening (he continued) whilst returning home to his lodgings, and when turning the corner of a street, he was seized by three or four ruffians, and nearly strangled by one who got his hand inside his neckerchief and screwing him up, was thrown down, kicked, beaten, and robbed; he called out "murder, police," &c. when three or four came up, seized him in spite of his remonstrances, and dragged him off to the watchhouse, letting all the thieves and ruffians go. His word or attempted defence went for nothing; his worship saying, that there were two policemen who swore to it, and he

Digitized by Google

could not but believe them, therefore fined him or committed him in default. Whereupon he was most indignant, and declared he would sooner go to gaol for a month than pay a sixpence, if he thought it would benefit such a set of perjurors. Whether his story was true I will not pretend to say, but it certainly seemed rather strange, that a man, after making such a statement, was not remanded for further evidence, if possible, when perhaps the order of things might be reversed, and the two policemen commited for perjury; however, that I believe is never thought of in the colony, whatever the police choose to swear to, is taken for gospel. At the time I am speaking of, I understood nearly the whole force (privates) had originally been sent out for their country's good to Van Diemen's Land, and since, for *good* conduct had been made policemen, thus verifying the old adage of "setting a thief to catch a thief."

Another case I heard, was of stopping a gentleman in the street and presenting a pistol at him, but this fellow caught a tartar, he had no coward to deal with, for the gentleman closed, and grappling the fellow, seized his pistol, and secured him. This rascal gave his name as Josiah *Goodgame*, but certainly he did not display the *gameness* so well as his adversary, who very properly was highly complimented by the Mayor, and Mr. Goodgame was subsequently committed and sentenced to gaol for fourteen years; however, I believe he soon managed to make his escape, and, as I heard, was

Digitized by Google

subsequently found drowned, or a man supposed to be him was so found.

In a day or two afterwards, I was myself made aware of street robbers, by getting *lightened* of my own purse, but certainly they were *very* kind, for they never troubled themselves with *screwing* my neck, and sticking me up against a wall, for it was not until I got home that I found myself minus. Observing in the papers, next morning, an advertisement, announcing "a purse found," I hastened to the place hoping to find it was mine, however, there was no such luck.

Feeling tired of remaining in the town without knowing a single soul, and unable to get any better lodging, I resolved upon moving to the country, and remain there until I was able to go to the diggings, but determined previously once more to endeavour and find the friends I came in search of at Melbourne. This time I was successful, and had the pleasure once more of seeing one of my oldest and best friends, after a separation of eighteen years; he was just on the eve of departure for England, and when he embarked with his lady, I started off into the country as before stated, in preference to remaining in such a miserable den. My friend had previously spoken to his Excellency concerning me, and wished me to take an appointment under Government, if I could get one, instead of going digging.

I found an exceedingly respectable farmer a few miles from town, who said I could stop awhile if I

Digitized by Google

liked. I was glad to get anything to amuse myself with, and having gone to New Zealand with the idea of farming, and having had a turn at *gold digging*, I was not afraid of *spoiling* myself by endeavouring to be useful. In a fortnight or three weeks I walked to town again to wait upon his Excellency, and whom should I meet, by the greatest piece of good luck, but a relative, (whom I had no idea was in the country), and most thankful was I at finding a friend, for who cannot say, a friend in need is a friend indeed, particularly when landing in a country without expecting to find more than one acquaintance at all events. I soon discovered he was not the only person I was acquainted with in former years, and, as may be supposed, old times were talked over again.

During the time I remained in Melbourne, a gang of ruffians boarded the Nelson in Hobson's Bay, and took away with them £30,000 worth of gold dust, several of whom were afterwards caught, and most of them found guilty; some however who were tried, and let off were doubtless concerned in it, but the want of evidence or prevarication got them off:—one, I heard, had turned round to a detective at Geelong, and said to him, "Ah! old fellow, you could not get me convicted, but I had a good snack, nevertheless."

It was asserted afterwards that this gang had been made up in Van Diemen's Land, and had crossed over with the intention of plundering the escort, but finding a vessel just about to start for

Digitized by Google

England with her gold on board, and quite unprotected, excepting by her own crew, whom they could make certain would not attempt to resist for fear of being shot, it was almost asking them to go and plunder her; since that has occurred, the agents or captains of vessels have applied for police or soldiers to guard the ship until she sails—being another case of "*locking the door*," *&c.*

During the months of March and April, nothing but bad accounts seemed to arrive from the diggings; the weather was overpowering — flies beyond all bearing—dust incomparable—water scarcely to be had—those having wells, charged from tenpence to five shillings a bucket-full; all the stuff that required washing to get gold, had to be carted nine miles from where it was dug; hundreds dying of dysentery, and thousands almost blind from sandy blight, made me thank my stars I had not gone up to the diggings when I first arrived; for what would all the gold be worth if you lost your health entirely? Gold, however, used to arrive in considerable quantities, both by escort and by private hands, but it was at this time found in some places in such quantities, that people used to be perfectly satisfied at "fossicking"* or "nuggetting," and never troubled their heads with carting any to be washed. The washing stuff, in some instances, was piled up for the purpose of being puddled and cradled when the rains set in, but many had left the stuff

* Picking the gold out of the crevices of rocks, &c.

Digitized by Google

long before that came, and gone away to "*knock down*" all their earnings, never perhaps returning. This was not always the case, but frequently so; occasionally, it might happen that some fresh gully, or new diggings were discovered, and of course every half mile the news travelled, it picked up SOME small addition as to its value; there would then be a general rush, hundreds, and perhaps thousands, going helter-skelter, endeavouring to get "eight foot square of ground." Should it turn out rich they never thought of going back. For this reason, I maintain there has been more soil wasted, and gold left behind, than almost ever has been taken out of some gullies that I know of, and fortunate will be those companies who get hold of them, but they never can be worked in a *small* way, for going down old places is extremely dangerous, it must be done on a large scale.

I shall explain this more fully at a later period.

A vacancy occurring shortly amongst the Commissioners at the gold fields, his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor kindly appointed me, when I made all haste to the *field of battle*, after having dispatched my luggage by a dray, the charge at this time being *only five pounds* per hundred weight.

Purchasing a horse, together with the *et ceteras*, and meeting a brother Commissioner, also a friend, going up the country, we made a start of it; my animal having a peculiar dislike to spurs, commenced, after getting a short distance from town, "buck jumping," I soon measured my length on the ground,

Digitized by Google

he starting off as hard as he could go, in the direction of the country he had been bred in. My two companions kindly going in pursuit brought him back, but he would not allow me to mount again; trying him in the yard of an inn, he threw me with my head on the stones, stunning me for some time. Here I was picked up by an old 7th hussar, (an Irishman), who was a sort of Jack-of-all-trades at the inn; who, when I recovered, said it was nothing at all to be compared with what he and his old master used to get out hunting. I asked him what part of England it was that he hunted in? He amused me a good deal when saying, that it was with Mr. *Danby's** hounds at York, when he was quartered there in 41 and 42, and like the *great* O'P. gave me a wonderful account of himself and several gentlemen, with whom I was perhaps rather better acquainted than he was, and, in spite of the pain I was in, could not help laughing heartily.

I walked back three miles to Melbourne, one of my companions kindly leading the horse in, and obtaining one which had just been purchased for Government by the Chief Commissioner, (W. H. Wright, Esq.), we again made a start. After passing Flemington (the village where I got thrown), the country, in consequence of the rain a week or two before, was looking beautiful, the grass

* "Will. Danby," huntsman to the York and Ainsty fox-hounds, too well known to sportsmen in the county to require describing.

Digitized by Google

on the plains quite green, and studded with open forests of trees, gave it the appearance of an immense park; villages, and settlers' head-stations, like country seats at home, adding to the panorama; but there were one or two things in a most deplorable state, namely, the roads and bridges. In consequence of the heavy rains that had commenced a short time before, the roads, which are only what are termed *bush* ones, (having been made merely by the traffic of drays, &c.), were now almost impassable for anything with wheels, it was barely possible to count the number that were stuck fast in every direction, some almost buried. The numerous passengers, both men and women, seemed in a most dismal state, the cursing and execrations of the drivers exceeded everything; the bridges were either washed away or dangerous to be crossed by any sort of vehicle.

The whole line of *roads* (or whatever they might be designated) were lined with people ten times as numerous as in New South Wales, all on their way for Mount Alexander. As the night drew on, people were pitching their tents and camping, almost up to their ankles in water. Reaching a party just at dark, who had got a blazing fire, we pulled up for a moment to rest our horses, get a light to a cigar, and "have a yarn;" they were just going to have their suppers, and kindly offered us a panican of coffee which was most acceptable; resuming our journey, and whilst fording a stream,

Digitized by Google

n consequence of keeping my nag a little too low, he stepped into a hole and gave me a *ducking*, by way of a cooling before reaching the station of my kind friends, Messrs. T. Ferrier Hamilton, and Riddell, whose brother-in-law, W. Stephen, Esq. was my companion; they (Messrs. H. and R.) were in town, but their representatives, McLaren and his *gude* wife, were not wanting to make us comfortable at Cairnhill, such being the name of the station, about six miles from Mount Macedon. The house is situated on the top of rather an abrupt rise from a flat, through which runs a beautiful clear stream; this is fenced in by posts and rails, forming a good paddock, in which are a few *bits of blood*; a garden well stocked with fruit trees and all other commodities, commencing at the house, covers the whole descent of the hill immediately in front. The parrots were amusing themselves there the same as blackbirds and sparrows do at home. Mr. McLaren congratulated me on getting out alive from the water hole, for a man was either drowned, or *all but*, only a day or two before from the same cause; however, being so well accustomed to narrow escapes, I began to get used to them, and was only adding one more to the number.

From not having been on horseback for so long a time, together with the bruises I got, made me on the following morning feel excessively stiff and miserable, and much more inclined for bed than anything else; however, that could not be, therefore saddling the nags, Mr. S. accompanied me to near

Digitized by Google

the Bush Inn at Gisborne; fording the stream here, again I entered the Black Forest, through which I understood there were two roads (qu. *bogs*); observing a man on horseback, with a large leather bag in front, I rode up and inquired whether he could inform me which was the best; his answer was that one was bad enough, and the other a great deal worse,—only expressing himself, as a matter of course, in bush language (which may be better imagined than described). However, he intended going the old road, thinking it was the shortest, I therefore followed; he was one of those specimens that may be met with every day in Australia, a loquacious, cunning, slang sort of fellow, up to anything, with particularly *spicy* ideas. He commenced asking numbers of questions; "Where I was going to? Whether I was going to dig—to set up a store—to buy gold?" and fifty more of various sorts; not getting an answer that was in any way satisfactory, and not being able to make out who, or what I was, he commenced to give me a description of himself; saying, he was a Government *official* (I began to think, was he one of the Jack Rattle breed, or was he one of the Van Demonian *genii?*), in fact the *Postman;* adding, he only wished he had as many sovereigns as there were lies told in the bag before him. Asking him whether he thought he'd be rich if he had? he answered, that he never would require to look round again; "I think," says he, "you are a newchum; how long is it since you landed?"

"Not many weeks," said I.

Digitized by Google

"Ah! I thought so, I'll tell you what it is, old fellow, you'll be a cleverer chap than I takes you for, if you can find a cove as tells the truth out here; it's not *in* 'em, now that is the *truth* if you like."

I then inquired whether he carried the belt?*

"Lord bless you! *me* carry it? I only wish I did, for I could turn an *honest* penny or two more than I do, if that were the case; there's too many of them big coves in the colony for them sort of *good* things; a poor chap like me stands no chance;" turning towards me, he continued, "I think you looks something of one of these *swell* sort of coves, and, I suppose, come to learn how to be colonial?"

"Just that," said I, (thinking it would draw his ideas out a little more).

"I thought so," he replied: "now look you here, my old buck, if you want to get rich you must do the same as others does, otherwise you never will:" wishing to be informed how that was, he answered, "tell as many lies about any thing as you can *shuv* in a bucket; whenever you're axed a question, consider a moment, and just answer as—"

(Interrupting him.)—"Your conscience directs."

"Conscience be ——! think how it suits your pocket; man alive, do you think conscience will ever fill a purse?"

"Perhaps not of itself," I answered, "but money dishonestly obtained does not often do the party much good."

* A prize for telling the greatest falsehood.

Digitized by Google

"Well," said he, "there must be very few then does any good out here, that's all I can say; why look at some o'them Commissioners at the diggings, isn't those the coves as is a doin' it slick, and some of t'others amongst 'em talks like a lot of fools, not knowing how to sarve their own interests."

My ears bristled up at this, and being most particularly anxious to hear what opinion this class of people had of the functionaries, of whom I was elected one, I said everything that I could think of to *draw* him out; for, I came to the conclusion that there were many people placed under the Commissioners who thought nothing of assuming the name of Commissioner when it suited their own interests, and subsequently from information I received from persons with whom I was acquainted, had not the slightest doubt in my own mind that such practices were adopted, with, but, like many other things, were difficult to trace to the exact individual; at the same time, I do not wish it to be supposed that I am attaching this imputation against the *whole* body of officers connected with the Gold Commission, for I firmly believe by far the greater part of them to be possessed of too high a degree of honour and integrity, and above the base actions which some have been suspected of.

Requesting him to explain how they (the Assistant-Commissioners), did it so slick; he said, "Why you see, *as ow* every month they has the *h*issuing of the licenses; well, Government you know, lets the

Digitized by Google

diggers pay in gold if they likes, at the rate of half an ounce for thirty shillings, which is the price of a monthly license, now don't you thinks it would be *wery* easy when taking gold instead of cash, just to drop a bit of gold into the scales, or put *(accidentally of course, only an accident)*, a wrong weight into the scales, and some chaps mightn't know the difference, particularly when they had such swags of gold, they wouldn't take notice; many's the time I've knowed chaps as wouldn't bother opening their gold bags again, and, perhaps, might have given a pennyweight or more over; and if it were returned into their hands, they would throw it into the dish where the Commissioner empties the gold; besides, do you suppose it possible, when weighing and a *h*issuing in such a hurry, they can weigh so exactly, why it would take half a day to get through a dozen people, and all the chaps would growl more than they do at present. I 've been both a buying and a selling gold, and buyers always takes the turn of the scales, which is allowable, for there will be a little waste, but when you weigh the whole in a lump, there must be a good lot over, and do you suppose there isn't a good *swag* over every day, when taking it in such small quantities as half an ounce at a time, or perhaps, if weighing for a dozen at a time, it would be half a pound."

Author. "Well, but that must all go down to the Treasury."

Digitized by Google

Postman. "What! do you think they're *all* such fools as *some* may be? Oh no, never fear, they takes good care to weigh it in the lump afore they sends it down; and they knows how much they has to make good, and do you suppose they are such flats as to send down more than's wanted."

Author. "Flats or sharps, I expect they have to declare before a Magistrate, the same as any other Government Officer, that he has sent all he has received, &c. or something of the same description."

Postman. "Declare! declare, indeed! who cares for declaring; I tell you once more, its no use telling the truth if you want to get rich out here; hasn't I to declare I goes as fast as I can; and do you suppose, or do you think they supposes I really does go as I says? not they; or if they does, they're most desperately mistaken. Do you think I don't get a bit lushy on the road sometimes at a sly grog shop, and take forty winks amongst a lot of bags of oats, or something that is laid outside by way of *blinding* the traps?"

Author. "Not the slightest doubt you do—(as he seemed pretty well on already) but that, I suppose, is the only way they manage to make anything extra."

Postman. "Not it, indeed; why there's old —— at —— Creek, and them chaps up at ——, all does it that way, I *knows*, but they're quite right: then you see the worst on it is, there are others as won't do it, and so they gets afeerd they may get catched,

Digitized by Google

—but you see, there's other ways of killing a dog besides hanging of him; them as has got money *of course buys* gold when they can, and sells when they can make a profit."

Author (*interrupting him*). "Indeed! it seems rather funny that Government Officers should be allowed to deal in gold when they have to receive it on behalf of the Crown; I should have thought their salaries sufficiently high to compensate them."

Postman. "There you goes again with your *being allowed;* why I tell you, they'll make more in six months that way than they would in three years by t'other; well, as I was a saying about buying gold and selling of it again, isn't it easy to say if they should get catched, it was gold as they had a' bought, and get their friend Swyndel-Dhygga, the Italian Jew as keeps a store, to swear to having bought it for 'em; do you suppose some of them chaps goes galloping all over the diggings with half a dozen troopers after them, and running about from store to store, as busy as devils in a gale of wind, and being such friends with all them sort of chaps, who writes sometimes to the newspaper and blows their trumpet a bit; then, no doubt, one good turn desarves another, when buying stores or things for Government of course they knows who of their *friends* to employ." (Giving a knowing nod and a wink.)

Author. "Do you mean then to insinuate that they

Digitized by Google

reap any benefit by buying stores, or get any drawback."

Postman. "Well, I don't know, but they says so, or if they doesn't get cash, perhaps (looking ascant) an *odd* case of wine 's a treat sometimes; a tin of red herrings perhaps is a relish for breakfast; a few sardines not a bad thing for lunch; and an occasional English cheese is not to be sneezed at after dinner—you understands, my old covey, don't ye?"

Author. "Oh, perfectly; but haven't you anything else to tell me? where does —— generally live?"

Postman. "Oh, he lives at ——; he's a wery good sort of man though, and just the man as should be a Commissioner, as he's wery well *beliked* by most of the diggers"—(at this moment we overtook and passed a pedestrian, but from the appearance of his boots he did not seem to have walked very far, and was dressed what would be termed "*a bit swellish*"); "any chap, you see (giving me a touch with the end of his whip, and winking his eye) as knowed him *well* afore, why he wouldn't be over fond of asking them whether they had a license or not—and then, of course, if the police seed he knew 'em, why they wouldn't axe 'em either; I knows one chap, who were an old *pal* of mine, as said he were wery kind to him; he were up there for three months, and he always told him never to mind paying his money."

Digitized by Google

Author. "How *very kind;* but what would the Chief Commissioner have done if he had found him out?"

Postman. "There you goes at the old game again; why, I suppose, *if* he had found him out, the chances are he would have sent him to blazes; but do you think a chap as can do the like o' that, hasn't got lots of slack jaw, and can't gammon people with big words enough, that he's the only cove amongst the lot of 'em as does anything; why, bless your soul, he's a chap, they say, as knows the dictionary off by heart, and gets among a lot of diggers sometimes to settle a dispute, and uses such a lot of queer words as none of 'em scarcely ever heard of before, at all events they can't understand 'em, and them as does, bursts their sides almost wi' laughing; and then finishes off by saying they're *both wrong* or else *both right*, so divides the ground between 'em."

Author. "What ground, do you mean if they are encroaching upon one another? and do Commissioners *always* go to settle these, or do they ever send other people in their stead?"

Postman. "As to that I can't be certain—they may be anything else for what I know; all I do knows is, that when a chap has a complaint to make, he has to go and lodge it at the camp, when a cove goes with him to get it settled, they calls 'emselves Commissioners, whether they be so or not, I can't tell; *howsumever*, these chaps never brings no

Digitized by Google

troopers along wi' 'em, and generally wears a shooting coat; well, now do you suppose if I wanted to gammon a chap out of his ground, that I couldn't manage to slip a sovereign into the man's hand as comes to decide, and who's to be a bit the wiser when a fellow's half a mile under ground; he then, of course, would give it in my favour, and axes the other chap whether he likes the way he has settled it, and if he says 'no'; then, says he, I must go and axe the Chief Commissioner, when you'll be fined five pound if he should agree; sometimes the chap (particularly if they knows they are really in the right) says, 'Well, go and axe him,' when he, of course, goes away for two or three hours, and when he returns, says, the Chief agrees with him, but that in consideration of circumstances, he is only fined *one* pound, which the chap pulls out, grumbling like fun, and abuses all the Commissioners like bricks; well, do you suppose that chap ever went near the Chief Commissioner? Not he; and as for the pound note, why you may believe that it went to keep the sovereign warm."

By this time we had reached the Five Mile Creek, which being a public house, the Postman could not pass without making a call, and was most particularly anxious I would have a *drain* at his expense, adding, that I should see a fine mob of *rowdies* inside, coves as could take the eye out of one's head without ever feeling it; begging, however, to be excused, I dug the spurs into my horse

Digitized by Google

and was pursuing my journey, when he called to me, saying he would tell me something else; pulling up for a moment, he said, "About five miles further on, you'll get to a place called Carlshrue, a police station, just make my compliments to the *Captin*, and say I hope he's well; you've nothing to do but to say the *Postman*, and he'll know whom you mean. Do you know what he'll say? why, he'll say that you've met the biggest rogue in all the country; ha! ha! good bye, old chap."

Certainly, when I got to a distance I was obliged to walk my horse and have my laugh out, for, scamp as the fellow appeared to be, he certainly was an amusing character; I began also to turn over in my mind all he had been saying, and certainly hoped, for the sake of the Gold Commission, that he had been indulging in *drawing the long bow*.

After making a call on my acquaintance, the Captain, at Carlshrue, resting my horse for a time, and partaking of his hospitality, I pushed on for Kyneton, a town which had sprung up almost entirely since the gold discoveries, previously having, I believe, only one tavern, with some two or three weather-boarded houses, but now had three or four large hotels, and a number of stores, shops, &c. besides innumerable tents pitched round about it.

Arriving at Mr. Fentum's hotel about half-past five, I was not long alone, being joined by one of my companions of the day before, and every five minutes fresh arrivals, both going and returning

Digitized by Google

from the diggings, began to tumble in; first amongst the number was the *swellish* gentleman, (whom I passed in the Black Forest), who approaching the window where I was, seemed to wish for a little conversation, and commenced with—

"Aw aw, rather a fine day, Sar."

Author. "Yes, but I thought it would have rained at one time."

Swell. "Aw yar-s, but that must be expected now; been long in this part of country, Sar?"

Author. "Not very, only landed a few weeks ago."

Swell. "Aw aw, ha ha, aw I thought so, Sar, excuse me."

Author. "Oh, certainly, I'm not so easily offended, but what makes you think so?"

Swell. "Did you not pass me in the Black Forest to-day?"

Author. "Very likely, I passed a great number."

Swell. "There was a fellaw riding, I think, with you."

Author. "Yes, there was."

Swell. "Aw, aw, I'd have broke his head if I'd been in you*aw* place to-day."

Author. "What for?"

Swell. "For nudging you in the fame*liarr* manner he did."

Author. "But two can play at that, and perhaps I might have come off second best."

Swell. "Aw aw you might, but aw I shouldn't."

Digitized by Google

Author. "I might perhaps have attempted it, had I not known the world as well as I do."

Swell. "The world, Sir? aw aw, ha ha; do you think a voyage from England would teach you the world, aw ha?"

Author. "I think a voyage at any time would teach one a good deal, and I think one to *these colonies* calculated to teach people more than ever they dreamt of, particularly those who did not know much before.

Swell. "No place like the colony though, Sar! Holloa! by heavens he*ars* that little scoundrel Swyndel-Dhygga, I'll be bound to say he has got that cart full of gold; how can that fell*ar* go down the road through the Black Forest by himself in his cart and take down a thousand ounces of gold or more at a time, and never be molested, without he was a friend of the thieves and bush-rangers."

Author. "I think you must be rather bold, Sir, venturing through the Black Forest alone."

Swell (*colouring*). "Aw, aw, oh you see I never go with any gold about me, (looking round, he caught me eyeing him most intently). Do you smoke, Sar?"

Author. "Sometimes, but I should like some dinner, first."

He now left the room, and rushing up to the Italian Jew with, "Ah! Swyndel-Dhygga, my old boy, how are you?"

Digitized by Google

Swynd. "Holloa! *Count*, vos dat you, well, how goes it—(in a low voice) all right, eh?"

Count. "Quite correct."

I began to think this appeared rather funny; the Count having called this same man everything but a *gentleman*, a few minutes before, and now the two seemed as thick as thieves; certainly making it appear as if the Count was *down* to his moves; in a short time Mr. S. accompanied by the Count, entered the room, with a large leather bag containing, he said, 1000 ounces, with which he was just running down to Melbourne—and retired with his bag after a while, for the landlord, I presume, to put in his strong box.

Gold Buyer.

Digitized by Google

At this time there were some five or six persons in the coffee room who had drawn round the fire, most of them indulging in a short clay pipe, which was valued according to its age and the beautiful black colour it assumed; one of the party, looking round to see if Swyndel had departed, and not observing him, said—"Why, there's that thundering thief again; I wonder what he's got now?"

Count. "A thousand ounces;" and complained it was a great *bo-aw* having to talk to such a scoundrel —"but men in business must do these things—however, he *aw* is a clev*ar* fell*aw*."

Author. "Pray, who may that individual be?"

Count. "Oh, Sar! you will soon know him if you go gold digging, particularly if you have a large correspondence."

Author. "What difference can that make?"

Count. "He's merely postmaster, as well as gold-buyer, &c. up there, and has established a charge of sixpence a piece for letters; that Sar, *haw, haw,* (looking round at the rest) is for those that haven't got money in them—those that have, as a matter of course, when inquired for, have never been seen."

At this rejoinder all the party burst into a loud laugh, and one who seemed a bit of a wag, said—"I wonder if he's the only one that's in that con-*sarn*" (winking his eye to the person next me).

Count. "Haw, I don't know, I'm su-*aw* (drawing the forefinger and thumb of his left hand across his upper lip with an assumed air of affectation), but I

Digitized by Google

think a fell*aw* would require to be very sharp to be a partner of his, otherwise he would get *done*."

Author. "Where does he come from?"

Count. "He *aw*, is of Italian extraction, but got lagged for helping himself to a *friend's* cash one evening."

Author. "A friendly action, certainly."

Count. "Let's see, Mr. Cheatemall, hasn't he been out of his lagging about three years?"

Cheatem. "It must be good that, 'cause he was tried for signing his *friend's* name to a *kite* about that time, but they couldn't prove him *quite* to be the cove that did it—some of the witnesses finding it more convenient not to know him again."

Another shout of laughter followed this sally, when a return digger said, "He wished they'd put him in the box against him, and he'd have *chanced* ever having seen him, and have sworn he had; for he thought him an out and out anointed *willan*, and it would only be saving the *beaks* a little trouble, and do a good turn for other folks."

The wag agreed with him, and said, "Fancy a fellow ever being mistaken in his *ugly mug* who had once seen him."

The waiter now entered the room, bringing a huge tray and the necessaries for preparing dinner, and was followed by Mr. Swyndel, who began abusing the shabbiness of the Government for not paying him a more handsome salary for the arduous duties he had to perform as Postmaster.

Digitized by Google

Cheatem. "But suppose they take it away, what would you give the Government to let you keep it; you knows you makes more by the letters than Government does."

Swynd. "Oh! mine Got, mine Got, how can I make de money! I lose all my time every day;" taking out an immense pair of pistols at the time, and by way of turning the subject, asked, "if any one would lend him a screw-driver;" when the wag replied that "he was one himself, he understood, at all events, they said, he'd been a *driving* a *screw* all day, and wouldn't that make him a *screw-driver*."

Blazes, the waiter, now reappeared, bringing all the varieties for comforting the inner man; and, I think, every one appeared to do pretty good justice to the repast. Tea being brought in, the Count complained that the water didn't boil—whereupon, Blazes (who was a red-headed Paddy) assured him that it did, or at all events it did *when* he took it off the fire; inquiring *when* that was, he said not *half-an-hour* ago, and the *tay* is only this moment made quite fresh.

After supper, pipes were the order of the evening, and then general conversation seemed to turn upon the honesty or dishonesty of every one in the shape of storekeepers, excepting, of course, themselves.

Being more inclined for bed than anything else, I soon sought my room, which certainly was very comfortable, but was not long asleep before I was

Digitized by Google

awakened by a little bit of a fracas in the adjoining room, the divisions being so thin that every word that they uttered could be distinctly heard; there seemed to be decidedly a squabble about the *division* of something, but I was too drowsy to pay much attention, nevertheless, the voices certainly appeared to come from two *persons* whom I had seen in the coffee-room.

Starting again the next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, during which a considerable number of *spicey* anecdotes, chaffing matches, &c. occurred, I called for the BILL, and without anything beyond what I have mentioned, excepting one glass of porter, it came to seventeen shillings and sixpence; boots, chambermaid, waiter, &c. just made one pound, and the hostler *kindly* informed me, when mounting, that the horse was *only* one pound more. So people may have some little idea of the cost of travelling there, and will perhaps be not a little astonished when I say that I considered it remarkably cheap, for what with oats being £3 a bushel, hay (at that time) about £25, and carriage of any kind of goods to Kyneton, £75 to £85 per ton, with other expenses to boot, I do not imagine that the landlord would be very much in pocket.

Crossing the Campaspie River (generally called by diggers the Compacity) by a bridge, and subsequently the Colaban, &c. (by the perversity act "Columbine") about three o'clock, we came upon

Digitized by Google

C.R.R. del. W.L. Walton lith.

Hullmandel & Walton Lithog.

CHIEF COMMISSIONERS CAMP CASTLEMAINE,
ESCORT LEAVING FOR MELBOURNE

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

the first of the diggings at Forest Creek, near Mount Alexander.

Comparing it with the Turon in New South Wales, is like resembling Kensal Green Cemetery to an ant-hill. The Chief Commissioner's camp is situated at the junction of Barkers and Forest Creek, after which it is termed Campbell's Creek, being generally so called after the squatters, who have runs for sheep, &c. in the vicinity, the native names being seldom used, which I think seems a pity.

The camp (as it is at present) has rather an imposing appearance, and in the illustration may be seen the escort starting at the end of June last year, having upwards of 105,000 ounces of gold, it being the quantity collected in *one* week from the diggers, for transmission to Melbourne; the guard consisted of one serjeant and ten privates of pensioners, under Captain Blamire of H.M. 99th regiment, and an officer, serjeant, and six troopers of the gold mounted police. This was the largest quantity ever sent during my time, and was conveyed on four three-horse drays, with another containing tents, &c. for camping at night. The escorts generally take nothing but their blankets, and have at times very rough work of it during the rainy season; a *private* escort had also permission to be formed, but whether it was good policy, allowing a number of men to wear a uniform, and run between the town and the diggings lawfully armed, I will not pretend to say, but I should imagine if *they*

Digitized by Google

could get the gold down and delivered to its owners (or those their agents) with despatch, surely the Government ought to have been able to do it; there was no doubt, at all events, that the Government thereby lost a considerable revenue.

The officers and men at head-quarters, Castlemaine (the new township) at this time consisted of the

Chief Commissioner,	W. H. Wright, Esq. (late 50th regiment).
Assist. Commissioners,	C. A. Doveton, Esq. (late 51st L. I.)
	J. M. Clow, Esq.
	W. Fenwick, Esq.
	Samuel Kingdon, Esq.
	J. A. Panton, Esq.
	and the Author.
Ditto for Gold Office,	E. S. Symonds, Esq.
Police Magistrate,	Robert Shadforth, Esq.
Assist. Colonial Surgeon,	W. McCrea, Esq., Surgeon Royal Navy.

Officer in charge of Pensioners, Capt. Blamire, (99th regt.); second ditto, Lieut. Finch, (11th Foot); Commandant of Gold Mounted Escort, Capt. Mair, (h. p. 99th); Escort Officer for Bendigo, Philip Wake, Esq.; Superintendent of Foot Police, Capt. Berkeley; together with a number of Clerks, and including mounted and foot police, pensioners, tent-keepers, servants, &c. &c.; they numbered nearly 300 (of course, not including the out-stations).

Digitized by Google

The present salaries are:—Chief Commissioner, £1200 per annum; for four Resident Commissioners, £700 per annum; for fifteen Assistant-Commissioners, £500 per annum; for twenty ditto ditto, £400 per annum; Police Magistrate, £600 per annum; Surgeon, £300 per annum (with permission to practise); Inspector of Police, £600 per annum; Officers on full-pay of the Army, 15*s.* and 10*s.* per diem, extra; Chief Clerk, £300 per annum; other clerks, £250, £200, and £150 per annum; privates in the Police, 8*s.* per diem, and the half of all fines, besides clothing; pensioners, 2*s.* 6*d.* per diem in addition to pension. Every one is, moreover, allowed rations, and the officers forage for horses.

Bark Huts and Tents near Forest Creek.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

TRIGONOMETRICAL SURVEY—PENALTIES FOR UNLICENSED DIGGERS—POLICE REWARD FUND—SKYHACKING—CANDLE LIGHT GOLD—ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S DUTIES—OUT STATIONS—CHIEF COMMISSIONER—MR. F. JONES—EGOTISTS—MYERS'S CREEK STATION—SAMUEL KINGDON, ESQ.—A PIECE OF CANNIBALISM—PEG LEG GULLY—CIVILITY OF DIGGERS—VALUE OF AN INCH OF GROUND—DIFFERENT DEPTHS GOLD FOUND AT—A LUCKY DIGGER—ENORMOUS PRICE OF FLOUR—ONE OF THE GENII—HIS OPINION OF THE LIEUT.-GOVERNOR—CAPTAIN HOMBOG—A NICE LITTLE INCOME—A YANKEE'S COOL REPLY—A NICE YOUNG MAN—THE COUNT AGAIN—SOMETHING HARD—BLOW MY SKULL OFF—HUMANITY OF A YANKEE SKIPPER—A MAN SHOT—SO MUCH FOR SYMPATHY—A 'GENTLEMAN' (?) SURGEON—WRETCHED STATE OF A SICK GENTLEMAN—SOME MORE HUMBUG—POT-HOUSE ELOQUENCE—A DISTRESSING ACCIDENT—GOOD CONDUCT OF BRITISH SAILORS—THEIR REWARDS.

By reference to the chart at the end of the book, the new townships, &c. may be seen, which have been established since the gold discoveries, and the author has much pleasure in being able to bring before the public, the first trigonometrical survey of all the gold fields near Mount Alexander; it was completed only a short time previous to his leaving the Colony, and, excepting a few additions of his own, was laid down by order of the Chief Commissioner, and is now compiled by Mr. Arrowsmith. The yellow lines denote where the gold deposits have been found, and at the upper part, in White Horse Gully, may

Digitized by Google

be seen the spot from whence the, "Victoria nugget," weighing about twenty-seven pounds, was taken, (and, subsequently, one of forty-five pounds, solid gold) which was purchased and sent home as a present to Her most gracious Majesty. These nuggets were not more than fifteen inches deep in the gully, and it cannot be many centuries since, I should imagine, from the position they were found in, they must have been lying bare. The different granite and quartz ranges may also be seen correctly laid down, with the various camps, &c. naming the commissioners in charge.

Perhaps no bodies of people migrate so suddenly and in such numbers at a time as gold diggers, every one rushing away, no matter how far, on hearing of new diggings, particularly should they prove rich, consequently the various camps require continually shifting; and, perhaps, in a few months they may have to return to their old places, according as the localities were too wet or too dry, &c. After heavy rains the gullies were extremely dangerous, and many get smothered from the bank giving way when trying to re-bottom their claims, having perhaps only just got to the washing stuff when they themselves got washed out; at other times the creeks being dried up, or what water there was being so thick, half the gold was lost; some of these places where the *tailings* have been washed into, have of late well repaid those who re-washed them.

During the first week of the month is the busiest

Digitized by Google

time at office work, issuing licenses, &c.; from the scarcity, at first, of Commissioners, some people would come for three or four days before they were able to obtain licenses; however, it was absolutely necessary that the Commissioner *signed* his name, otherwise, if they were only *stamped*, as some suggested, Government would be liable to be defrauded, for the police would, when going round to inspect, be unable to distinguish a genuine license. Parties found without licenses were subject to a penalty of five pounds for a first offence, ten for a second, and fifteen for a third, notwithstanding which hundreds and thousands evaded payment, and it was difficult to know what plan would be the most efficient; some proposed licensing the number of cradles; I was myself inclined to think that the best plan would have been to compel every tent to have one of the party's name on it, which should be entered on the counterpart of the license book, and make the head man responsible, and fine heavily, or imprison those parties, that did not comply; at the same time giving him licenses for all his mates, (in case of the absence of the head man), *stumping* each, with the same letter or number; also not to require people, before they had their tents pitched, to show their licenses: for the police, to save themselves trouble, never being accompanied by an officer when going on that service, were not particular, and would go and seize even those just arriving, who never had time to reach the camps to obtain one.

The system of giving *immediately*, half the fines

Digitized by Google

obtained, to be divided amongst the force was also, I consider, bad. If this had been converted into a fund, to reward handsomely any daring conduct, in capturing bush-rangers, or ruffians of any description, and establishing a reward fund for long services, good conduct, &c., it would encourage steady men to remain in the force and behave themselves well, in order to obtain a share of the profits; no person should receive anything (unless for *extraordinary* cases, which should be left to the judgment of the Chief Commissioner), except at a certain fixed time, New Year's Day for instance. Let all those who could shew a twelve months' good conduct ticket be rewarded with a certain sum, and according as they remained on another twelve-months, let their share be increased the following year, proportionately to the state of the funds. A great number, more particularly men who were discharged soldiers, &c. not altogether unaware of the advantages to be obtained by their good conduct, having a similar regulation in the army, would, many of them, be more inclined to remain in the force, which doubtless would be much better than the continued entering or discharging men, for no sooner did officers (particularly at out-stations where they had but few) get to know the men under them, and whether they could put confidence when sending them to perform a duty, than they were changed, for either drilling at head-quarters, or getting discharged upon some plea;

Digitized by Google

and perhaps, not waiting for that, take French leave for themselves, when you might as well try to find a needle in a hay-stack as look for any one at the diggings; there was neither much fear of men ever attempting to make a prisoner of one who had escaped, for they might be sure of being mobbed and the man rescued if they did.

The "*skyhacking*,"* to which the police were subject when sent round to inspect people's licenses, was brought on principally by their own individual overbearing conduct, many having been accustomed to that system of convict discipline, it was not in their nature to perform their duty quietly without bouncing, bullying, and swearing at every one: to ask a man quietly whether he had a license was quite out of the question, it must be accompanied by some low-life expression, making, of course, respectable men extremely indignant, and if they remonstrated, they would handcuff them, and swear they resisted them in the execution of their duty. I have myself had to check men when taking a party out on duty; and, if such occurs before officers, what will they not do at other times? It no doubt was extremely vexing to be shouted after, but their own conduct and language, rendered them obnoxious and encouraged people to shout. This is not only my own opinion, but I have heard repeatedly from well-known respectable men, that such would not be the case, or at all events, half so bad, if they were a little more circumspect in their demeanour.

* Blackguarding.

Digitized by Google

There are not many places in the world where physiognomists could have such a good opportunity of displaying their knowledge, or exciting their curiosity than by sitting in a licensing tent (or on the bench) at the gold-fields, where thousands may be standing to take their turn, and amongst them, of course every description of expression that the human face can be heir to, from the sterling happy-looking face of an honest John Bull, down to some of those fiends possessing that smoothness of tongue that would make people believe, if they heard them, that they were the most innocent creatures on earth; but when you *did* look them full in the face, and their eye caught yours, though perhaps only for half a second, (for it was not in their power to do so longer), you felt a sort of inward inclination to say, "You ruffian, I see through you, cunning as you may be;" and perhaps whilst this identical man was paying for a license in gold, you would hear, "Candle light, candle light." This occurred to me the first day I ever issued licenses, and being a novice, I inquired of one (whom I saw to be of the first lot I mentioned), what it meant, he said the man was what they called a *night fossicker*, who slept, or did nothing during the day, and then went round at night to where he knew claims to be rich, and stole the stuff by candle light. This was a very common practice, but they all managed to escape detection. In California, if a man was caught committing an offence of this description he would be handed over to the Vigi-

Digitized by Google

lance Committee, and, if found guilty, it would not be long ere he was *fixed* to a tree. Horrible as such a summary process appears, it has struck such terror into ruffians, that I understand from people who have just returned, that robberies of any description are scarcely ever heard of, and that at the diggings you are as safe, as if you were locked up in the coffers of the old lady in Threadneedle-street; however, I trust such proceedings will never be dreamt of by Englishmen, though without doubt it has been the most effective manner of suppressing crime in that country.

There seems to be one great difficulty, which is, to know what to do with the vagabonds; the gaols are full to overflowing, and, excepting breaking stones inside, there is no alternative; if they were put on the roads, they would require as many soldiers, or police to guard them as there would be prisoners, so many are the chances of their escaping.

The duty of the Assistant Commissioners at the gold-fields is, in the first place, to issue licenses monthly, by taking thirty shillings for each, writing the man's name, and entering the same in the counterpart of the book, which is returned to the Chief Commissioner's office, preparatory to being forwarded to Melbourne at the end of each month, showing the number of licenses issued, and at the end of every week a return of the same, together with the cash received, has to be transmitted.

The next thing required is the settling disputes

Digitized by Google

about encroachments: some parties taking more ground than they are entitled to; sometimes, when underground, they get beneath their neighbour, and kindly take his gold away before he gets down; great squabbles and occasionally desperate rows occur on this account, and it is here principally where good judgment and the *best temper* is required; a plan, however, had worked itself somehow into a custom, that *before* the Commissioners went into the case at all, a class of persons called Inspectors went previously to the holes, and if the people then appealed to a Commissioner, (whose decision was always final), he was called on to go, and whoever lost the ground was, or was not fined, according as the Commissioner chose; but it happened so frequently that there was as much evidence both for and against each person, that the best plan was either to divide it or draw lots for the whole. It lay in the power of the Commissioner to take away the ground altogether and give it to another party, but what would have been the use? for, as soon he had left, the party who had been put into possession of the hole, would be asked to walk out, with a polite intimation that a pickaxe and their heads would be better acquainted if they refused, should they again prefer a complaint, they might stand a chance of being murdered some night.

At the out-stations Commissioners had considerably more to attend to than at head-quarters, for there they were generally alone, with the exception of their clerk, and in addition to settling disputes

Digitized by Google

and issuing licenses, had to do police officers' work, attend to magisterial business; obtain supplies for men and horses; and send in weekly returns of the number in the camp, both of men and horses, also number victualled, sick, how employed, and a report comprising everything that had occurred worth notifying, either as to increase or decrease of population in the various gullies, whether any new diggings had been discovered, the prices of various articles, from diggers' boots to ladies' shoes, the conduct of the men, and then at the end of the month a return of provisions, &c. with the usual *declaration* of having sent in all correct.

My sojourn at head-quarters, Forest Creek, (since created into the township of Castlemaine), was not allowed to be of long duration, for towards the end of the first month, our worthy and *deservedly* respected Chief Commissioner gave me notice that I must prepare for a start, the population of the Bendigo district having increased so much as to require more out-stations, and a stronger force in the neighbourhood; some of the Assistant Commissioners having requested an augmentation, one of whom most strongly recommended that all the rest should be placed under HIS immediate orders. This seemed to cause universal laughter, some sarcastically, others ironically, or with a certain amount of indignation which I could not understand, not being at the time *up to snuff*; keeping, however, my eyes open, and ears not entirely closed, I certainly began to think that the stories of the postman,

Digitized by Google

when coming through the Black Forest, were not altogether without foundation; and from what I both heard and saw during the few months that I was at Mount Alexander, certainly, my own opinion, confirmed most of the stories that were previously circulated; they were, however, very far from being confined only to those people called Gold Commissioners; in such a barefaced manner were a few things done, that I could not help remarking to a gentleman connected with Her Majesty's service, "What a pity —— ——— (mentioning a gallant Admiral, well known) is not here, to *rectify* a few of these things," with which he perfectly concurred.

On the day appointed, I made my start from Forest Creek to an out-station; I was most fortunate in obtaining permission from the Chief Commissioner to take Mr. Francis Jones with me (*pro tem.*) as a clerk; he was one of those gentlemen who came out with good introductions, and very properly took a situation as clerk at first, with the promise of a Commissionership in time, should he prove himself adequate; and it is with great pleasure I now state that he is Assistant Commissioner for the Gold Office at Bendigo; his *strict integrity* and highly honourable and gentlemanly conduct obtained him promotion, and I feel warranted in stating he was *universally* respected, even by some of the DAWS, who had grown to such an immense size, in consequence of peacock's feathers having been stuck in their heads for the first time in their lives—

Digitized by Google

and facetiously christened by the diggers "*Gold-headed canes in a fit.*"

After bivouacking two nights on the road, I went to the Camphill Station at Bendigo, which is prettily situated on a hill, and was well selected as a head station, being as central as possible, for there are more considerations than one in forming a selection for a permanency (or at all events for some time).

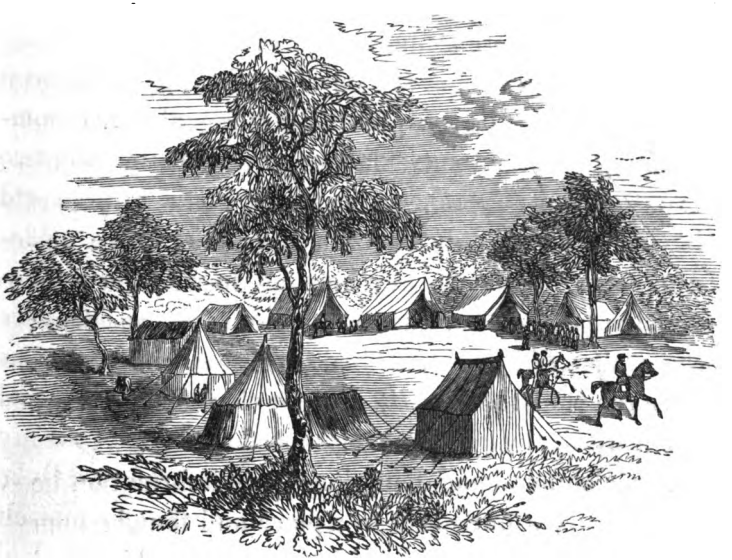
I here inquired my road to Myers Creek, the place where I had been directed to form a camp, and expected to get a trooper sent with me to show the way; this escort failing, my brother officer evincing too extreme an anxiety for my life, refused to allow me to depart without *his* accompanying me, or, at all events, if I would ride back and rejoin the party I had brought up, and take them a particular road, he would ride another way round to meet me.

People who, for the first time in life, have been placed in the position of having men under their command, or to act as arbitrators, &c. between any two parties (particularly when their position in the world may be as different as a street-sweeper and a nobleman,) are generally inclined to imagine that the generalship they have had to display in the performance of *any* duty, or trouble, is beyond all that ever was heard of, and certainly more amusing egotistical stories have not often before been drummed into my ears; my companion imagined the late lamented Duke could never have seen or done half what *he* himself had done, the *hypothetical* manner in which *he* had

Digitized by Google

solved problems, and puzzled the heads of the Tipperary boys; how *he* always felt compelled to take a large body guard in the shape of five or six troopers; and how ridiculous it was sending me to the place where I was going without the same; that my life was not safe for one moment; the tents would be rushed; the gold stolen; myself murdered; and I don't know how many other prophecies were not driven into my ears, which, however, I heartily enjoyed as soon as I could get away from my new and amusing acquaintance, thinking perhaps at the time that he imagined he was talking to one who had not seen anything of life, and I daresay thought that I took all down as gospel.

Having fixed upon a spot near the bend of a creek near to Mr. Myers's sheep station, as soon as



Author's Camp, Myers's Creek. Licensing Day.

Digitized by Google

the drays arrived we commenced pitching the tents in the form of a semicircle, the party consisting of a sergeant and nine foot police, also my tent keeper or servant. The best place we could find at that season of the year very much represented a large *sponge*, or perhaps, when walking on it, was something like half-thawed snow, and in spite of all the drains that were dug during the following week or fortnight, you might imagine yourself every morning in one of Mr. Mahomed's vapour baths, and, as a matter of course, blankets looked as if covered with a hoar frost. People in England might imagine this would kill them outright, however it never injured any of our party during the four months we remained in the same position.

The Assistant Commissioners at the various outstations have to sign a number of books by way of *amusement*, before going to bed every night, for the clerks to issue during the day—he having to patrol his district for the purpose of settling disputes and listening to complaints, and not unfrequently having to accompany a stranger who had come to report having found the body of a murdered man; endeavouring to obtain any clue as to who the murdered man might be, was entirely out of the question; those that did know, or had ever seen him before, were too cautious to *split*, fearing that should they say a word, their fate would be sealed also.

Mr. Commissioner Kingdon, from information he received, went one night to a place and found a man who had had a pick-axe driven through his head

Digitized by Google

first, and then thrown on to a fire; the wretches who murdered him, trusted that people would imagine he had been drunk and so stumbled into the fire and was burnt to death; a jury of diggers being sworn, the only verdict that could be returned was, "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown;" and so, most likely, they would remain unknown until the end of the chapter: for all the rewards in the world that could be offered would never find out the right parties.

Returning one evening to the Camp, after being in my saddle (which generally was the case) from half-past seven in the morning, riding over different parts of the district, I found a man waiting to inform me of a piece of *cannibalism*, that had taken place in Napoleon Gully, a part of the diggings that not two hours before I had been riding through, when all seemed to be quiet; he asserted that there had been a drunken row amongst some men, and that one had bit the *nose* off another and *eaten* it; turning my horse's head, and desiring the police to follow, I immediately galloped to the place, and riding up to a blacksmith's (where, as usual, news could generally be heard), I was not long in discovering the tent, and finding my information was perfectly true—certainly, so far as a man's nose having been bitten off,—but my informant no more knew who it was (or even the name of the individual) than the man in the moon—though he seemed perfectly satisfied in his own mind that the said *nose* had been swallowed. As for finding out any further

Digitized by Google

particulars, that was hopeless—the gully appeared perfectly quiet, but some, whose faces had become familiar, informed me they had heard a drunken kick-up about two hours before, and had been told a fellow had eat another's nose, and there the matter ended; nevertheless, the whole party decamped in a day or two (or rather in a night or two), when no more was heard of the *no-nosed.*

It was not long after forming our new camp that complaints were made to me respecting encroachments, &c. From the stories that had previously been forced into my ears, about the conduct of *every* body almost on the diggings, one might have been led to suppose that attempting to go amongst these *vagabond diggers* without some five or six troopers as a body guard, and being yourself armed with one of Westley Richards' latest improved revolvers, was the height of insanity, (unless you wished to be murdered outright); however, having no troopers, I thought my knowledge of human nature was sufficient, and trusted to the *general* (though perhaps not universal) feeling amongst gold diggers, that of wishing to see justice done, (for if otherwise, why should they come to ask your interference?) Rejoicing at not being bothered with an inspector, I accordingly trusted my *valuable* life alone amongst these demons (?) of diggers; arriving at the place where some thousands were digging, known by the name of *Peg Leg* Gully, (from the circumstance, I believe, of three old fellows with *timber toes,* being the first to strike on the gold in that locality), I

Digitized by Google

dismounted, and was hanging the bridle to a tree, when up run one or two directly, *touching their hats*, saying, "I'll hold your horse, *Sir*, he may break his bridle and get away." Thanking them, I gave the animal to one to hold, asking him, at the same time, what luck he was having? pointing to his cradle he said, "Axe my mate, Sir, to shew you the dish, as you pass," which I accordingly did, and in an instant his mate seemed too delighted shewing it to me, containing about seven pounds weight of gold, *this* being their forenoon's work; he also said they had sent to Melbourne (three of them) seventy-five pounds weight besides; therefore this was one instance to prove that wealth had not made men in the humbler class of life *too grand* to be civil. Following the man who had preferred his complaint in respect to disputed ground, a large crowd of men, numbering a thousand or more, immediately gathered together, but what was their object of so gathering? was it to pitch me neck and crop into a hole, if I did not give it in favour of the party who mustered strongest, and were determined that they should have it right or wrong? Was it to give evidence if required? Was it to endeavour to annoy me, so as to *get a rise* out of me? or was it from curiosity to see whether I was inclined to favour one party, because they were what are termed a *swell* party, more than another who were not? or if I intended amusing the public by making a small mountebank of myself, and deliver

Digitized by Google

a *flowing* speech, commencing by explaining the *vast* importance of my own position, the great opinions that other diggers, store-keepers, &c. had of me, the fearful lot of work that *I* (the great *I*) had done; winding up with a dissertation on the mathematical difference between a parallelogram, and right-angled triangle, or the sexagonal form of a hole? In answer to these questions, I must say—purely from curiosity. Both parties would commence, perhaps, declaring it was theirs, but, I quietly informed them, that if they wanted me to decide impartially, they must speak one at a time; this was instantly complied with, and hearing both parties, and witnesses *pro et con*, and deciding to the best of my judgment, either by a division, or drawing lots, the case was satisfactorily settled, for it was not difficult to tell by a sort of popular feeling generally, if one *really* was in the wrong. The lower orders of Irish were the most boisterous at times, however a little humouring generally had the desired effect, as far as settling those sort of disputes; I can safely say, in justice to the miners, that during the whole time I was a Commissioner at the Gold fields, I always received the greatest civility from the men whom I should call *gold diggers;* there were plenty of ruffians loitering about the place, who gave a little slang sometimes, but there were many more disposed to respect, and support authority.

Such was the value at times put upon a piece of ground, that it required the greatest nicety in

Digitized by Google

measuring to an inch; upon one occasion in this same gully, I drove a stick underground, and drew a knife along to shew the line through a mass of gold as thick as plums in a Christmas pudding; the largest quantity I ever saw *myself* washed out of one of these *pockets*, (containing not much more soil and gold mixed, than would fill a hat, or at all events a bucket), was *twenty-seven pounds*, this, I mean, of small gold, from pieces of about a penny-weight to fine dust; but I have heard of upwards of *fifty* having been taken from one place. The largest lump I saw in this gully was about three and a half pounds; and it is rather a strange fact that in the Mount Alexander district, wherever such very large pieces were found, but very little small gold was discovered, and the large lumps were generally near the surface. Since I left, they have been finding at Ballarat a hundred weight *nugget*, fifty feet deep, with just as much small gold in proportion. This latter statement rather disagrees with some theories of Geologists.

The depth at which it is found varies considerably in Peg Leg Gully; at the upper end, near to the junction of the Eagle Hawk, the washing stuff was not above six feet deep, a little lower down, it was about sixteen; then at a bend (where the Germans washed out the before mentioned 27 lbs. weight in a short time) it shallowed, not being more than nine feet, and at the lower end it was nearly thirty; but this was rather a new feature in this gully, and why it

Digitized by Google

should not hold good higher up, and in many other places I cannot well understand; doubtless at some future period when mining becomes *systematically* done, we shall hear of a good deal more being found far lower than it has ever yet been, even in the places that have been turned over and over again. Passing some people one day and enquiring what they were doing, their reply was that they had been very unlucky indeed, had bottomed several holes and found nothing; dismounting and descending the hole to see *what* they termed *bottoming* the hole, I found that although they had got to pipe-clay, it was mixed with too much other stuff, gravel, &c. and persuaded them to persevere in the same place a little longer, feeling confident they must find something good from the appearance of what they had then reached. Not going near precisely the same place for three weeks or so, I forgot all about the affair, which happened during the second week in August last year; when engaged in issuing licences, on the 1st of September, I observed a man coming up with a very smiling countenance, and saying to him jocularly, that I concluded he had had such good luck, that he intended paying the Queen double this month; he replied, we have had a run of luck lately and we've more to thank you for it than any one; not comprehending what he meant, I asked him, how that could be? He then enquired if I did not remember advising people one day to sink lower down; which it appeared was

Digitized by Google

his party, and that by so doing, they had taken out more than 20 lbs. weight of gold a man since, and now, says he, as soon as we've worked the hole fairly out, I intend starting away back home to England with the *old 'ooman*, a place I never expected to see again when we left; but, please God, I'll finish my days there yet.

The prices of everything were now most exorbitant, flour ranged from £150 to £200 per ton; what made it so expensive was the bad state of the roads, (or rather they should be called bullock tracks), but how was it to be helped? It was all very well for the papers setting to work abusing and throwing the whole blame on the Government; but could they say how it was to be remedied? Men would never leave off gold digging for any sort of good wages to go breaking stones on a road, those even that were obtained to perform the work, required as many overseers almost as road makers to keep them at work, and then perhaps if they were spoken to, would coolly tell him to go to the devil, and take themselves off into the bargain, for it was a well known fact that pass when you would, one half were generally sitting down smoking their pipes, and not one amongst the lot ever did a quarter of a day's work.

Would not every one connected with the Government have been too glad if the roads had been good; and were they not anxious to make them so, if it were possible to get people to work, for did it not cost

Digitized by Google

all parties £120 a ton; Government had not drays of their own, they all had to be hired, and it was not very likely they would get theirs cheaper than other persons. To form some idea of what wages men required just at that time, I need only give the following illustration; I could not obtain men for *thirty shillings* a day to build up a rough bush stable, with stuff all ready at hand, parties who engaged to come struck for a higher price.

Amongst communities of this description there are always, of course, to be found men, who for their disagreeable propensities are shunned by respectable people—even by their own connexions—and these men, for the sake of endeavouring to do something, try very hard to gain a popularity amongst those who are more ignorant than themselves, and endeavour to persuade others to do this and that, for no other use than eventually to ask them for money, or hope by inciting them, to create a disturbance; it may thus be the means, should they figure greatly in it, to be offered some situation under Government to hold their tongues; this, a man had the credit of doing at Mount Alexander—he was what is generally termed "*cut*" by nearly all the relatives he had, therefore sought sympathy amongst the lower orders, advising them to desist paying their licences if the roads were not in a proper state of repair by a certain date—got up a memorial to the Government, which was accompanied by a *threat* that if *this* or *that* was not done, they would pay no

Digitized by Google

more licenses; called meetings of diggers; and I heard several who were competent to judge, say, that from the ridiculous speech made by this unfortunate man, they were surprised his friends did not put him in the Lunatic Asylum, or try and keep him somewhere. However he got the petition signed;* went up to Melbourne in great force, and took it (accompanied by some others of his clique, I suppose) to his Excellency, who received him with his usual courtesy; this seemed so to surprise this unfortunate man, that he came back to the diggings saying, there never was such a man as Mr. La Trobe—it was a shame people abused him so. He now had a different opinion of him—he thought him a real fine fellow—he had treated him as one gentleman *ought* to treat *another;* he now saw the difficulties Government had to contend with—he would do anything for them—would not be surprised if he was not soon holding a high appointment under the Crown himself. At all events, he thought of offering his services; he would let the Commissioners know which of the (*now*) *rascally* diggers did not take out licenses; they might now sleep in their beds quieter—and half a hundred more ridiculous stories were told me almost every day for nearly a month; by this time he had devised a new plan for endeavouring to raise the wind, so placarded

* Rather a strange one, I imagine, if accompanied by the *threats* I understood it was.

Digitized by Google

about, that, "For the *convenience* of the gold diggers in the Bendigo district, Captain Hombog* had *kindly* given up his own time, and would obtain any number of diggers' licenses at the trifling sum of three shillings each, and save them the loss of time attendant on the application." BENEVOLENT MAN! Finding plenty of poor fellows green enough to answer to this bait, he drove a good trade; but was there nothing else he did? Oh! dear, yes; after drawing the license money and the commission as well, kindly gave them a PASS, saying, shew that to the Commissioners when they ask you for a license, and they *know* me so well, that it will do; he never had found it convenient to go for their licences, and when the Commissioners considered it their duty to send out the police to search for unlicensed diggers, many a poor deluded gold digger got taken up and fined by the Police Magistrate for not having a genuine license; producing only a pass signed GEORGE HOMBOG!

As may be supposed, he stood a good chance of getting his head broken by his clients for this dodge; however, he persuaded them it was all a mistake and he would get it rectified; whether he did or not, I must leave people to guess—but all I know is, the diggers never got back any of their fines.

* Any one who has been a soldier or sailor, always is called *Captain*, on becoming a settler in a Colony—no matter whether he was a drummer or a cabin boy.

Digitized by Google

Finding the expected Government appointment so long coming, he thought he must try some manœuvre the other way again, so put himself forward as a candidate for the situation of a "Gold Digger's Dodger," and general visitor of all the diggings—intending to impart such general information as was necessary to all gold miners; the quantity of gold found, the likely appearances of it as a gold country, and to draw up any petitions, memorials, or anything else they could think of, and would always undertake to be chairman and general speaker upon all occasions (in fact, if they wanted to create a disturbance, he was the boy to *cook* it for them), provided they would come to the determination of paying him only *one shilling* each per month. This, considering there were only 70,000 diggers, which would make £42,000 per annum, was only a small trifle to receive for the arduous duties he had to perform. Should he find *flats* enough, I shall not be surprised to hear of him making a mob orator of himself in St. James' Park or Paddington Green, here at home, some of these days, when he may possibly pay me a visit; for he will not then be afraid of hearing there is room in Newgate—as I once had occasion to hint to him through a policeman, concerning the accommodation, together with board and lodging he would be likely to find gratis, in the stone walls at Melbourne, if he practised any more of his *licensing* system. The last I heard of this genius was, that he had endeavoured to

Digitized by Google

borrow the American equestrian circus affair to hold a meeting in—but the Yankee told him, "He guessed two parties never hit off *acting* in the same place together;" he then got perched on a dray, and I suppose, every proposition that was made was carried *unanimously*, any one who might propose an amendment, would do as well to propose for himself, at the same time, a broken head—which might be sure of being carried.

At the diggings, certainly, I found some strange characters, who endeavoured to make it appear they were the most amiable people living; one of whom I must now describe. Returning to camp one day about two o'clock, the hour for the troopers to dine and give their horses a feed, I observed the foot-police at the camp were all collected around an old gum tree that had been cut down for fire wood, apparently as if hunting opossums. Riding close by they told me the tree was full of flying squirrels and flying mice—at the same time, a person putting on a most sanctified appearance, was imploring them not to injure them, quoting some passages from the Bible, proving that the Scriptures forbad it. At this time he had his back towards me, endeavouring to make it appear that he had not seen me; for on hearing me speak, he suddenly turned round, begged pardon, took off his hat and made me a most profound bow, saying, "I presume, Sir, you are the Commissioner?" Asserting I was such, he replied, "That he had done himself the honour of

Digitized by Google

coming to call, having established himself in Beelzebub gully near my camp, and it was his intention of performing divine service every Sunday;" he was dressed in black, with a white tie, and the respectability of his garb, certainly disarmed my suspicion of deceit. Asking me if I knew a Mr. —— in town, and saying he was a great friend of his, and he, Mr. —— at the same time being a friend of mine, I inquired if he would not take some lunch; which, however, he declined — saying he had so much to do, that he begged to be excused, and away he went. I observed one of the police (who was an old hand in the country and well up to all such gentlemen's tricks), eyeing him pretty considerably; when he went away, I called him over after a while, to ask whether he knew that clergyman?

"A parson, Sir!" said he, "a parson! I think he must be one of the *old gentleman's* if he is a parson, Sir! all I can hear of him is, that he is the greatest sly grog seller in the diggings, only he's too clever to be caught;" and on looking round I saw my companion smiling, who said immediately, "What's the Church coming too, at last? here's a fellow calling himself a parson just been to get a license to set up an *orange stall*, or something of the sort." I certainly was unable to help laughing, although about his *sly grog* selling, I could not altogether be certain.

On the same evening, a gentleman who had just

Digitized by Google

returned from the Murray River, paid me a visit, and, in the course of conversation, described a *precious nest* he had found the previous evening, at a bush public-house where he stopped. On my saying that I supposed they were of the bushranger description, or a lot of diggers who had gone to *knock down* some of their gold, he answered, that although there were many of that sort, they were not the people to whom he alluded: there was one fellow who goes by the name of the *Count*, (here I wondered whether this was the same I met in the Black Forest) and his man-of-*all*-work the *parson*, who ——

(*Interrupting him*). "What sort of a looking fellow is the parson?"

Having described his appearance, which perfectly coincided with the *humane* man who was quoting scripture to the police, he continued, by saying that some fellows had been backing him against any one else to commit the most *cruel* acts towards poor dumb animals, cats, dogs, &c. by torturing them most brutally. I then mentioned what had occurred that day, when he replied that that was nothing, and when I'd been in the colony as long as he had, I should come across plenty such characters; he wanted to back himself to sell more grog in a day on the diggings than the publican did, now that he had got the *tea-kettle* and *camp-oven* dodge to work. I thought I had seen a few *schemes*, when a digger myself in New South Wales, but had not seen this

Digitized by Google

practised; camp ovens would be put near a fire, filled with liquor, and boys would go round with tea-kettles, amongst the diggers, supplying "something *hard*"* to those who wanted it; when they see you coming they drop it and are busy digging directly, and for some time no one in the shape of a Commissioner suspected anything in a boy carrying a tea-kettle, or thought of taking a lid off a camp-oven, particularly if an old woman, (who of course would be very busy breaking sticks, &c.) was apparently cooking, and the trade of these murderers† and robbers in disguise was carried on to an immense extent: the fine of fifty pounds was a trifle.

I inquired, "How about the Count?"

"Oh, he pulled in the same boat with the *parson*, who, he said, was a rattling fellow at working a *good dodge*, for his sanctified appearance and preaching enabled him to drive a good trade; the Count, I think, finds the money and the parson the wit or the artful dodges; he's a downright scoundrel, and I hope you'll catch him napping, no doubt he's come to try to make it all right with you, so as not

* Spirits.

† My readers may imagine that I am using too strong an expression, in applying the word *murderer* to those who sold liquor without a license, but when I mention hereafter the description of stuff, and the ingredients of which it was composed, and the object for which it was done, they will not be surprised; and I apply it ten times more strongly to those who call themselves respectable men, than others who have got perhaps altogether beyond *shame*.

Digitized by Google

to suspect him, should you meet him accompanying his drays, he will imagine if *he* says it's *all right* that you'll not order a search."

Not being a magistrate at the commencement, I should have been laying myself open to be fined if I ordered a dray or tent to be searched (unless perhaps it might have been to look for a murderer) without a warrant, but certainly never did my fingers *itch* so much as they did to catch this hypocritical scoundrel, if (and I have no particular reason to doubt it) any of these stories were true.

The *stuff* to which I before alluded was called "*Blow my skull off*," a printed recipe for which was discovered, together with some of the ingredients, about the persons who were caught in these dens; the proportions I forget, but they were as follows:—

"Cocculus indicus, spirits of wine, Turkey opium, Cayenne pepper, and rum;" to this was added about five times the quantity of water, and sold at 2*s* 6*d* per wine glass.

I heard that these ruffians generally considered one glass sufficient to stupify the general run of mankind, but if they thought him likely to require a little more, they would make it a trifle stronger; he was then, as a matter of course, when in a sort of stupefaction, easily robbed of all he had. Occasionally, these vagabonds would entrap him near his tent, and then of course make off, when his mates, or perhaps his unfortunate wife and children, would find him in this deplorable state. Several of these

Digitized by Google

unhappy cases I myself witnessed; whether the Parson, as he was termed, used to treat his *flock* in this manner, I will not say, but am very much inclined to think that when a person was capable of doing some things, he would not be much above doing others; his *humanity* put me in mind of a keen American Captain in New Zealand, who said he was doing a most *humane* action, carrying food to California for the living, and clothing for the dead, when he loaded his ship with "coffins filled with potatoes."

During the time of holding an appointment as a Commissioner or a Magistrate in the Gold-fields, (particularly at an out-station, where he requires a smattering of all trades), it may be supposed that he is often called upon to witness not only events that are occasionally rather amusing, but circumstances more frequently of a most distressing nature, and still more so when it did not lay in his power to afford assistance; still such imposition was carried on, and such ingratitude was displayed on the parts of those to whom assistance sometimes was given, that it was really absolutely necessary to be extremely cautious, in doing anything beyond what you were in duty bound to do, except *advise* people to the best of your judgment, for should you exceed that, you might sometimes hear of yourself being well laughed at for having been fool enough to do so and so; not but what there were many cases deserving sympathy, however not unfrequently for

Digitized by Google

doing, as you would wish to be done, by if in their position, you got into hot water and bad repute.

Upon one occasion a man came to my camp about half-past eight o'clock at night, writhing in agony, his gun (or pistol) having gone off accidentally when out shooting opossums, and had injured his hand frightfully; there was no surgeon at my camp, and none amongst the tents that were near, therefore, obtaining a lamp, and being kindly accompanied by a neighbouring gentleman, we started for the diggings, which were about two miles off, to find, if possible, a surgeon. On reaching some of the first tents, a digger joined our party, to take us across the holes in the best place, which at any time was rather unsafe, and at night very dangerous; tumbling into a blind one myself, I stood a chance of being smothered in the mud; we succeeded at length in finding a doctor, but as to who he was, or what he was, beyond seeing his name as Dr. ——, painted on his tent, I was not aware, neither in what branch of the profession he practised: observing, "Royal Navy," by the light of the lanthorn, I did not doubt for a moment that he was a *surgeon;* he surprised me certainly on saying he had given up being a surgeon and was now an M.D. and that he did not practice surgery, however, when I mentioned the circumstances of the case, he kindly paid every attention to the wound, and did the best he could. The man said

Digitized by Google

he lived in Sailors' Gully, and would return in the morning for the doctor to look at it by daylight; however, he never came back, consequently never paid; for, on enquiring a day or two afterwards in Sailors' Gully, if they knew of a man having been shot in the hand, and where he was to be found, a respectable looking man approached and said, "Do you mean a man that was shot at the camp, Sir, at Myers' Creek?" I said "Yes, a man came to the camp when we were all going to bed the other evening, whose gun had gone off accidentally and blown his fingers nearly off;" "Ah," said he, "I thought his story rather improbable, although I heard him swearing such to be the case." Being most anxious to know what his story was, he mentioned that the man stated he was going near the camp fire to get a light to his pipe, when the sentry fired deliberately and shot him through the hand, and that I had turned out of bed and had taken him to a doctor, who was an old *pal*,* to get it patched up, and that he had started for Melbourne, to bring an action against me. So much for his gratitude; but the whole case did not rest there, for, on riding out one day, I was met by a man who called himself a surgeon, who began to abuse me "for taking the bread out of his mouth;" not exactly comprehending his meaning, I begged him to explain; he said, "Why, Sir, after shooting a man

* This *pal*, as he was termed, I had never seen in my life before.

Digitized by Google

the other day, you took him over to a *physician* to have his wounds dressed, instead of bringing him to me a *thorough* and *competent* surgeon, whereas every one knows the other man to be a fool." I certainly never felt so much inclined to drop the handle of my whip on to any man's head in my life, but calling up a trooper, and inquiring whether he had any stirrup handcuffs, made him rather humble and meek, offering then every apology, &c. saying he had been misinformed. I let him go, but more for the respect I had for his cloth (as I knew him to be a surgeon in reality), than himself, otherwise he would have been better acquainted for that night with a gum tree having a chain round it, than his own bed. The only thing I wondered at was, that the bright stars on the diggings, who used to write to the newspapers, had not mentioned anything about this would-be *murdering commissioner*.

Similar fracas being of common occurrence, one really hardly knew when you were being imposed upon or not, however there were instances at times *vice versâ*.

I could mention twenty such cases: but select the following in order to give some idea of what people may expect who fall sick at the diggings. Patroling through a part named Sydney flat *(vide* Chart*)* a good natured looking woman came out and requested to speak to me, pulling up immediately, she said there was a person, and from his appearance

Digitized by Google

evidently a gentleman, in an adjoining tent to her husband's who appeared to be in a dying state, and his mates had all gone away and left him, thinking there was no chance of his living, but that they (her husband, self, and another couple living next them) could not bear to see him left to die in that manner, and had done what little they could, but he was anxious to see me; dismounting, I accompanied her into the tent, and there true enough was this unfortunate man, just as I expected from her description to find him, apparently not long for this world; in a feeble voice he told me his father was a Lieutenant in the Navy, that he had been Chief Officer in one of Green's ships of Blackwall, and had left her at Hobart Town to go to the diggings, he had got a severe cold, which had brought on fever, and internal inflammation, producing suffering to a great extent, and, as he said, had it not been for the kindness of these good women he should have been dead long ago, his mates had all left him when they thought there was no more chance. Had it laid in my power I should certainly have felt inclined to stretch a point as far as I could for the son of an old brother officer; but had I taken him to the camp the jolting might have killed him on the road, I was therefore compelled to leave him to his fate. There was no hospital at the diggings in spite of subscriptions having been raised, and meetings held, which generally used to consist a great deal of what is commonly

Digitized by Google

termed, HUMBUG being *talked*, one person *talking* about how proud he would be to act as their chairman, and that being such a friend of the great men, and some half a dozen rich people (who were looked upon as somebodies on account of being rich, &c.) who would no doubt *patronise* it and him, and a lot more balderdash which would *draw out loud cheers* for the Chairman of this great place that was not even built, and of which it does not appear likely ever being commenced; the thanks of the public are then given to the Chairman, and the kind people who have *talked* and taken the arduous office as Secretary, *Treasurer*, &c. (for as a matter *of course* he would pay to such a charitable institution the five per cent a week which would be made by the cash being used to buy gold and transmitted to Melbourne), the meeting would then break up, and the *public* leave just as wise as when they came, with the exception of being a few shillings more out of pocket, having been TALKED into subscribing.

There were three things that required to be considered (even had there been a possibility of getting this person anything to have made him comfortable) before taking his case more into consideration than any other, particularly when such tricks are daily played; he said that he was so and so, but if such was the case, who had he got as partners or mates? had they been sailors of the ship he belonged to I do not believe they ever would have deserted him, it is not the general character even of the worst of

Digitized by Google

sailors* to forsake a sick messmate; was it possible that he could have got gentlemen for partners? if so I do not think it very likely they would have left him; he would not say who his party were, therefore for all I could know, he might have been a Hobart Town bolter, and a nice place it would have been for the thief-catchers to have found him the guest of a Commissioner.

I only mention this latter part on supposition, but had any one performed an act of kindness in that manner, and it chanced to turn out as here narrated, he would never hear the end of it, besides affording an opportunity for the pot house *eloquence* that occasionally might be heard to fall from the lips of one or two of the *polished gentlemen* in the *big house* of the Colony.

The circumstance relating to sailors was connected with a most painful sight, not that I was called to witness it until the vital spark had fled, nevertheless the scene of horror that it must have furnished, can be better imagined than described.

I have previously mentioned the careless manner in which people go to work for obtaining gold, and from want of proper precaution frequently get smothered; hoping it may guard people who are *novices* from proceeding in the like manner, I mention this most heart-rending case to shew, that although they may imagine the ground around them *comparatively*

* I shall relate a circumstance hereafter that I think will bear out in a great measure this assertion.

Digitized by Google

speaking, safe, yet, should their feet once *really* stick fast, all mechanical skill (except perhaps steam, which is not likely to be handy when such an occurrence takes place) will not save them from an almost certain slow and untimely end.

Four brothers were digging in Peg Leg Gully, endeavouring to bottom a hole again that had been filled up during the floods; the stuff that had to be thrown out was soft sticky clay. After getting nearly down they had not taken due precaution to shore the sides up properly, not thinking of the immense weight of stuff that was in all the surrounding filled-up claims, and the small *original* wall that there was to support this weight. One of the banks slightly giving way, they endeavoured to keep it up (when too late) with shores, branches of trees, &c. Whilst in the act of doing this, the younger brother, who was down in the pit, stuck fast; not thinking much of so sticking for a moment, I believe he continued working; however, finding he could not extricate himself, his brothers immediately rendered their assistance; this was no avail, and immediately they called for help. In less than a minute many arrived, with ropes, buckets, bailers, shovels, scoops, &c. and set to work endeavouring to clear away the stuff, and some sailors dropping down got him slung, when every one that could get hold, tried to pull him out, he at the same time having his arms round his elder brother's neck, who had got his again underneath his brother's arms and clasped round his back,

Digitized by Google

the elder one having a good hold with his feet, but it was of no avail, the stuff slowly filled in upon him, and as it rose the poor brother was compelled to let him go to save his own life, and the unfortunate lad was smothered. There was one thing that might probably have saved him, if any one had thought of it at the moment; the boots that he had on were a pair of Bluchers, and long before the stuff had even reached his knees he could have pushed his hand down and cut the strings, when his boots would have stuck, but his feet would most likely have come away, and the poor fellow's life been saved. As soon as the news of the accident reached my ears, I repaired to the spot, but found it was too late to be of any assistance, and had I been there, the chances are the thought about cutting the boot laces might not have struck me at the moment. The poor brothers had gone home when I arrived, and a little strong-built active-looking Scotch sailor told me the particulars. Had it not been for him and three other sailors, the chances are the body would never have been recovered; however, before the evening they conveyed it to the tent of his brothers; but so fast had he stuck, that after rigging a Spanish windlass across the top of the hole, they could not effect a start until digging right down to his feet, and doing this they stood in a very dangerous predicament themselves. These men were in no way either acquainted, or had ever heard of the others before, and I certainly felt not a little proud seeing

Digitized by Google

sailors on shore *in the bush*, shewing landsmen the way to work, or at all events that they had *hearts* to feel for others, and help them in distress, for I was told they had sent the brothers away, saying if it was possible to get his body up, *they* would do it; one of these men I subsequently found on board the "Statesman" when I came home, having made about two thousand pounds, and he informed me the Scotchman had gone home before in the "Eagle" with nearly twice as much.

It was not at all an uncommon occurrence for banks to fall in on people, entirely through their own carelessness, but such is the infatuation when gold mining that nothing else is thought about except handling the *base metal.*

There is one other circumstance which frequently occurs, causing many to sacrifice their lives, which is, having charcoal fires in their tents at night. The last thing before going to bed, an old iron nail box (the general substitute for a fireplace) having holes made in it, is filled with red hot charcoal from the fire, and taken inside the tent, which is then perhaps entirely closed. Upon several occasions in my district, I was called to see unfortunate victims of their own stupidity, who presented a most ghastly appearance; it seemed almost as if people never heeded any of these examples, for ere another week had elapsed, within 100 yards of the same place another instance would occur.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VIII.

HORSE STEALING—SANDY—A KNOWING TRICK—ENGLISH AND SCOTCH VER. IRISH—A COLD HEARTED BROTHER—THE PEG LEG ARMY—A YORKSHIREMAN—GERMANS AND HUNGARIANS—FORTUNATE AND UNFORTUNATE DIGGERS—PUDDLING—THE WHITE HILLS—TREMENDOUS HARD WORK—QUARTZ CRUSHING COMPANIES—COMMISSION OF INQUIRY—MANNER OF WASHING GOLD IN BRAZIL—PLAN IN SIBERIA—MR. HOPKINS—SIR R. MURCHISON—MR. E. H. HARGRAVES—DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN VICTORIA—MOUNT KORONG—AN ILL WIND THAT BLOWS NOBODY GOOD—WHITE HORSE HILL—THE OVENS DIGGINGS—AUSTRALIAN ALPS—MR. J. M. CLOW—DISCOVERY OF LEVIATHAN NUGGETS—NEW REGULATIONS IN N. S. WALES—EMPLOYING FRESH ARRIVALS—TRICKS AT REGISTRY OFFICES—ANOTHER CHANGE—HOUSE BUILDING COMPANIES—A STRANGE STORY.

PERHAPS in no part of the world is the crime of horse stealing carried to the same extent as in the Australian colonies; the examples that are made seem to have no effect whatever in checking it; it is not unfrequently done in the most barefaced manner, people going up and taking a horse at his feed, and trying to *bounce* the rightful owner out of it, and tell him to go to the Commissioner. Away, perhaps, the man will go to lodge a complaint, when of course the other mounts the horse, and away he goes some twenty or more miles, where he has heard of an auction, and sells him there, having taken care to get a receipt signed that he had bought the horse by

Digitized by Google

Mr. So-and so, at the other end of the country. Others used to make a deal of money by driving a mob of horses that they might find, right away to some snug spot out of the way, and obtaining a copy of their brands, go and look over the diggings, and read the various notices on the trees about different rewards offered, when of course they found him quite by accident; and if they should be caught on their backs and committed to take their trial, they say that it is a "very hard case, a reward is offered for a horse, and if they finds him, and are taking him back (?) to the owner, for doing of a *act of kindness* they gets lagged."

It not unfrequently happens that they go to the pound, and seeing several good horses out of some hundreds, come perhaps the next day well dressed and mounted on a horse they had *borrowed* and ask the pound keeper if he has seen horses answering the description; of course he says he has, and immediately they are handed over after paying the fee. These may be driven away to another part of the country and sold, not forgetting even to sell their friend's horses also, who were *so kind* as to lend them.

A new code of laws for the prevention of horse stealing was brought forward by the Attorney-General and adopted by the Legislative Council during the last session, when it is to be hoped the present existing evil will be remedied.

It rarely happened that a week passed without something reached my ears in the shape of either an

Digitized by Google

amusing anecdote, or a piece of ruffianism, with a variety of cunning tricks practised by various parties at the diggings or in the neighbourhood. Having finished making up my weekly returns one Saturday evening, an acquaintance paid me a visit, who generally had something extraordinary or queer to tell; after sitting down and wiping his (rather inclined to be bald) head and face with a handkerchief, he commenced by saying, "Oh dear, what would I give to be a Scotchman! it's not possible for any fellows like us to get on, when they're about."

"How so?" enquired I.

"Why, there's Sandy —— has got as many men as ever he wants, sheep shearers, shepherds, gardeners, farming lads, &c. and here am I offering twice as much, and can't get one of any sort or kind."

"I suppose you've got a bad name amongst them," said I.

"Not a bit," he replied, "when I say that I give them *double* what he does; the fact is, he gives them *nothing at all.* I daresay I could manage the same if I could but talk Gaelic; you see he goes down to Melbourne, and a vessel comes in from Scotland loaded with a lot of poor fellows from the Highlands, who don't understand one word of English; he being able to talk to them in their native tongue, gammons them with all sorts of stories about murders and thieves at the diggings, and telling them that they will be sure if they go there of being robbed, but if they like to go to his place for two or three months, they will find a most *hearty welcome*—plenty of work

Digitized by Google

and very little pay, you understand?" said he inquiringly.

"Oh, perfectly well," I answered.

"Then you must know that he brought a whole string of them up (shewing them a few of the rowdy scenes on the road of course) to his hospitable (?) home, and told them to amuse themselves for a day or two, and look about the place; seeing one or two of them gaping about with their mouths wide open at the magpies, and laughing-jackasses in the trees, about a quarter of a mile from the house, sends down one or two of his men for a lark, and catches hold of one of them and *bails him* up to a tree, demanding his money or his life, the other runs like mad up to the house to tell Sandy, who seizes his gun which was loaded purposely with powder, rushes out of the house, and fires both barrels; of course the fellows decamp, and having called all the others to follow him, which they did immediately, having picked up anything in the shape of a weapon, to be revenged upon the supposed bushrangers; Sandy immediately abused the lads for being so foolhardy as to venture far away, but added that such an adventure was not thought much of at the diggings, and it was only fortunate that he had escaped with his life; upon this they all declared they would not go digging yet, and made arrangements to stop upon the wages of former days for three months, which is about as long as Sandy will want them, next year of course he must look out for more, and work another dodge."

Digitized by Google

Occasionally there have been some most serious fracas on the diggings, through the feelings of jealousy that existed amongst different countries. The *belligerent* parties were generally English and Scotch, versus Irish; the latter acting in a moment without any consideration, falling upon and half murdering, a *wrong* party upon some *imaginary* idea, which on being investigated, proved to be absolutely nothing; about the latter end of July last, or the beginning of August, there was a dispute between a Tipperary boy and an English party from Geelong about a piece of ground, and in a bit of a scuffle the Irishman went headlong into a hole full of muddy water, and the Englishman partly so; the latter got up and joined in the universal laugh that was set up; this laugh so enraged the Irishman, that he swore not an Englisman should be alive in the gully that night, when away he started; no one ever imagined for what purpose he had gone, therefore forgot all about it; when lo! at one o'clock, when most of the people were getting dinner, and having a rest, a yelling was heard, and a whole crowd of Irishmen with pick-handles, axes, &c. came rushing down, and fell upon four young men who had nothing whatever to do with the party who caused the disturbance; one had his head split open with an axe, and the others most frightfully hurt, this was a signal for the whole gully to be in an uproar, and a desperate fight ensued; the original party, who were attacked, ran into their tent, (they being outside sitting by the fire eating their dinners)

Digitized by Google

seized their guns, revolvers, &c. fired away into the middle of them; the ringleader got shot through the lungs, another one in the head, a third in the side, the Paddies finding the other party were not to be trifled with, made off pretty quickly, doubtless all running to get their firearms; happening to be riding through a gully about half a mile off at the time, the news soon reached me, but on my arrival the birds had all flown, but men were laying in all directions most desperately wounded, some of them the medical men expected mortally; the man who was shot through the lungs, had a brother in the gully who was never in the affray at all, but the cowardly wretch was afraid to come, even to hear his brother's last words; he confessed to me that one of their *byes* had been *bate* by the English, and so they had come to have satisfaction, therefore *bate* the first persons they came near, in the same gully, *expecting* they had something to do with it. What became of the others I never could learn, only that one who was shot in the head had asked an old man to allow him to lie down in his tent, which he refused, for (as he told me) he might have been tried for murder.

There was no doubt, the whole of them left that part of the diggings and went away for some weeks, for a Jesuitical priest that was there seemed to be poking about, endeavouring to find out whether the subject had not entirely dropped; a gentleman, I understood, told him one day for a hoax that there was a fine chance for him, for a hundred pounds

Digitized by Google

had been offered to any one who would split upon the parties.

I believe that had they been caught it would have been of little use, for the men who had got broken heads (excepting, perhaps, those who fired, they being respectable men) would not give evidence against them.

An inquest being held on the following day, a verdict of justifiable homicide was returned, when the body was directly begged in order to be buried *da*cently; but not an Irishman shewed his face until after the inquest, though what they had to fear was best known to themselves.

At the particular request of the diggers, I remained with as many police as I could obtain (excepting the camp guard) on the diggings that night, for they were expecting a night attack, and doubtless it was premeditated revenging the man's death, had they not been aware there was some one with a bit of paper, called the *Riot Act*, in his pocket, as for wanting special constables, I might have sworn in a couple of thousand, had occasion required it; certainly for several nights after (hundreds shifted their tents in consequence of the row, to be near the camp), I never heard of *better sentries*, no end of times did *their* guards rouse all the army, imagining the enemy were at hand. The sentry at our camp one night called me and said there was a riot up the creek; instantly jumping out of bed, I hastened down to the scene of action, and certainly could not

Digitized by Google

help laughing at the cause of the alarm; I believe every male on the creek was under arms, some one had heard a coo-ey, and another had *quite distinctly* heard the same sort of *yell* the Paddies had set up before, after allaying their fears as well as I could, when on my return home, some one called out, "Helloa, Sir, is that *thoo?*"

"Yes," said I, "its me."

"Mah wod I were vary nigh geeing thee t' contents o't goon—for ah clicked hod'en t'piece as thoo ware passing, and I thowt to mysen, if he puts his head insarde mah tent I'll blow his breans oot."

"Thank you," said I, "it would'nt have been a very Yorkshiremanlike trick to serve a countryman in that way."

There would be an occasional row between some of the vagabond lot who used to go about in gangs, finding out where good claims were, and endeavouring to bully or "bounce" them out of their ground; it happened sometimes to a Yankee, who would look at them as coolly as possible until they had finished, when, perhaps, he might ask them if they had done, "cause if so, he'd say, I guess its lucky; otherwise I calculate it would be long sickness or sudden death to you, that's all," pulling up his red shirt high enough to shew them one of Colonel Colt's best seven barrelled revolvers, also a *small* bowie knife stuck in his belt, at which they would take the hint by making themselves scarce.

In justice to our friends across the Atlantic, I

Digitized by Google

must say, that during the whole time I was at the Australian gold fields, I never recollect an American being brought up either for robbery or anything else disreputable (unless it was for not having a licence, and then but seldom), they generally seemed to keep together, and if people left them alone, they would not interfere with anybody, but if others would make themselves obnoxious, they might rest assured they were awkward customers to deal with; whenever I had to settle a dispute between an American and *any* other nation, the former were invariably in the right, and I only wish all gold diggers would listen to reason as well as they would, and doubtless many squabbles would be prevented; there was a dislike generally to them, on account of the manner in which any one almost was treated, who went from Australia to California; certainly nothing would be more likely to occur than such a feeling, considering that every one who went from the Australian colonies to that El Dorado, no matter who he was, or what he was, was looked upon as a "Sydneyite," which was an insinuation that he was a convict, or had been one, or descended from one, at all events he must be connected, more or less, with convictism.

There was another class of people who were a most particularly quiet, orderly, well-disposed, and industrious set of people, and those were Germans and Hungarians; in fact, any almost from the central parts of Europe.

Digitized by Google

I think the most fortunate men, generally speaking, on the diggings, were the Adelaide miners, who were mostly Cornishmen, also sailors, Germans, excavators, farm labourers, and the general run of the lower orders of Irish; the most unfortunate, I think, were those who came under the denomination of "Swell Diggers" and soldiers, or men who have been soldiers—the latter, after a time, preferring the police force to mining; there were, however, several instances of great success attending gentlemen who were digging, one with whom I was myself acquainted, cleared upwards of £3000 in six weeks—but this was a rare occurrence.

The most fortunate of any was a person who generally went by the name of the Yankee Skipper, he was only a young man; however, it was no matter where he went, he was sure to get gold, and would obtain £40 to £70 a day, whilst the others all round would not make a shilling.

All the diggings to the north-west of the Bendigo Creek were shallow, generally speaking; only here and there did they extend thirty feet, but from five to twelve was the general average down the middle of each gully—but so badly had it all been turned over, that the ground was literally wasted. I observed one party, last September, clearing out the same hole near the junction of Sailors and Eagle Hawk Gully, for the *third* time, and were then getting an ounce a day per man; I consider that the whole of the ground so dug over is worth being re-

Digitized by Google

worked, particularly, places where the tilted slate runs across a gully, even when the crevices had before been cleared and swept out; I knew one instance, near Forest Creek, where the crevices had been refilled—the rain washing soil into them, which produced on being washed, five ounces of gold; the man who washed it, did so, more for curiosity than anything else.

All the soil here has to be *puddled*, in conse-

Puddling.

quence of its clayey nature; and even then a great quantity is lost, for it has subsequently to go through the cradle—and do what you will, the clay rolls up into balls, which takes away a quantity of the gold.

The best system that ever I saw practised was

Digitized by Google

using what is called a "Long Tom;" the stuff is put on to an inclined plane, having holes perforated in the bottom, like the hopper of a cradle, water is either pumped on to the higher part, or sometimes a dam is made, and the stream turned into it, the soil is stirred about and the gold passes through the holes on to a receiver below; Californians said, that if the stuff produced five cents of gold to the bucket full of earth, three men could make an ounce a day each; this plan was not generally adopted at Mount Alexander, but was a good deal used on the Turon, and almost universally, I believe, in California.

The yield of gold from the Bendigo district, I imagine, has never been exceeded anywhere—more particularly the quantity taken from the Eagle Hawk, Peg Leg, Sailors, Long, Ironbark, Tipperary and Golden Gullies, but perhaps the greatest of all was taken on the right bank of the Bendigo Creek itself, particularly at the junctions of Golden Gully, the Back and Spring Creeks, &c. all this was surfacing, either finding it sometimes on the surface, or within a few feet. It appears rather strange, that although such quantities were taken out on one side of the Bendigo Creek, there was scarcely any on the other, (at all events comparatively speaking,) excepting at the upper part, near to the junction of Golden and Newchum's Gully.

The manner in which the hills were worked was very different; at the White Hills (*vide* Chart) a party commenced to sink through tremendous

Digitized by Google

hard stuff, apparently as if it had been cemented together to prevent any one discovering what was beneath; after several weeks they came upon the gold, which soon was a signal for the whole place to be converted into a description of *rabbit* warren; after taking away all the washing stuff immediately under the hole, they found underneath a soft pipe clay, therefore sinking first a few feet into this, they commenced driving (tunnelling) all round, and instead of standing on the gold, it was all overhead; the reflection by the light of a candle, was very pretty in some places, where gold was very thick shewing through the pipe clay, reminded one of being in some fairy's cave; this is all knocked down and conveyed to the creek to undergo the usual process —the men at this sort of work more resembling millers than anything else. It happened repeatedly that other men who sunk subsequently to the first lot, on reaching where they expected to find the gold, would discover their neighbours had saved them the trouble—for they had tunnelled underneath and KINDLY relieved them of any further *inconvenience* (?)

This hill, also, from the want of being properly shored up, when tunnelled, had been made so dangerous that a great deal has been left unworked; one or two of the neighbouring hills have been dug into and gold found at the bottom; I think the principal reason why people have left so many other hills alone, is, on account of the excessive hard work that attends the sinking. Should any Company be able

Digitized by Google

to get grants of the land from the Colonial Government, they cannot fail of being *very* profitable—for there are many places that I am confident from their appearance and locality contain as much gold as the White Hills.

There are also innumerable gullies lying between the Sheep Wash Creek, or the Campaspie River, and Bendigo, which have never yet had a single pickaxe driven into them, that exhibit as much indication of gold being below as any other. I think people are always waiting for some one else to try, not wishing to throw away their own labour on an uncertainty.

Of all Companies, however, none, I think, will ever beat quartz-crushing companies, if properly managed; from all I have seen, I am inclined to think that one half the quartz about Bendigo contains gold more or less. A friend of mine, one day, went out to get some specimens of different coloured quartz to keep for mere curiosity; he never went near the diggings, but just picked up little bits here and there, putting them in his jacket pocket; when he brought them home, he scrubbed them with a brush in a basin of water without dreaming of gold; the boy subsequently (who always had a *keen eye* that way) was going to empty the water, and in so doing, found several specks of gold in the basin. Had this been picked up amongst any old tailings, nothing might have been thought of it, but being collected accidentally on the surface, was a very different affair; and if these small pieces of

Digitized by Google

quartz contain gold, what must such places as Specimen Hill, near the Eagle Hawk, or the one near Iron Bark Gully, besides other large quartz ranges, contain? These are now being blasted by a few people merely to obtain specimens for sale, and certainly some magnificent ones (as far as being valuable) are daily found; this quartz if crushed to powder, and put through the quicksilver machine would, doubtless, prove highly profitable.

At the time I left, a Commission of Inquiry was sitting at Castlemaine, consisting of the Chief Commissioner and Mr. Rusden, to hear the opinions of the diggers respecting the quartz-crushing companies and various other matters connected with gold workings; such at least was, I understood, the nature of the inquiry; but it had only just commenced, therefore, I was unacquainted with the full particulars.

The "Yankee Skipper" himself told me, that he thought there were miles of country around the camp at Bendigo, that would pay for washing the *whole* ground by a company, although it would not remunerate individual miners, on account of the doubtful nature of the drift; certainly, I am inclined to the same opinion regarding a good deal of the ground; but to state that *all* of it would pay for washing, is perhaps too hypothetical an idea.

If a combination of interests could be effected in Australia, a mode which was formerly adopted in the vicinity of Rio das Mortes (River of Death) in

Digitized by Google

Brazil, and alluded to by Robert Hunt, Esq. (Keeper of Mining Records) during his interesting lecture on the "History and Statistics of Gold, delivered at the Museum of Practical Geology," it could not fail to prove highly profitable to all parties concerned.

He stated upon the authority of Dr. Welsh that the vicinity of the river everywhere attested the extensive search for gold that formerly must have been pursued there, at one time considered to be one of the richest parts of the Brazils, from the quantity of gold found near the surface. It would be altogether unaccountable to one unacquainted with the cause, on observing the extraordinary manner in which the banks of the stream were furrowed. The vegetable mould had been all washed away, and what remained was a red earth, cut into square channels like troughs, with a narrow ridge interposed between them. Above was conducted a head-stream of water, let down through these troughs which were all on an inclined plane; the lighter parts of the soil and clay were washed away and the gold remained behind.

This manner greatly resembles the "Long Toms" of the present day, only one is made out of the soil, and the other out of wood; or, perhaps, more properly like the great cradles of nature—"rivers."

We read that the Moravians, about three centuries ago, used to wash the auriferous drift by throwing it into a box, having a plate at the

Digitized by Google

bottom perforated with holes and after being well stirred about with the hand the larger portions were raked out on the side, whilst the smaller, passed through the holes with the water into a sort of trough, which was divided into different compartments, also on an inclined plane; the sediment in the upper one is always the richest, which had again to be washed in a smaller bowl, similar, I suppose, to the tin dish now used.

This method more nearly represents the cradling of the present day, only that the former was done by a fixed apparatus, and the present one is rocked similar to a baby's (which often makes a lucky digger say that he has got a *fine child* in the cradle, when having a good lot of gold), but this plan will doubtless be considerably improved during the present days of progressive science.

Several plans have been adopted at the Siberian Mines which no doubt in the course of time will find their way to the Australian Mines, and by the further aid of steam power will be worked to a great advantage. I must now mention it is asserted on the best authority, that with the labour of eight horses, twenty men and six boys, *two hundred tons* of auriferous soil may be worked in a day, at the same time, a small error, is likely to produce very serious results, should the manager not have the required skill; to warrant erecting any thing of the sort, a large quantity of the gold-bearing drift should be at hand, together with a

Digitized by Google

proper discipline which *must be* maintained amongst the people so as to keep everything in action.

There are several methods mentioned in books we may read, upon the different processes which auriferous soil goes through in various countries, Siberia, Transylvania, Africa, Brazil, California, Australia, &c., doubtless the most effective of all will be those that can work the greatest quantity of stuff in the shortest space of time, requiring the smallest number of men, and at the least expense.

I heard that Mr. Hopkins of the Port Phillip mining company, had a machine of his own invention, by which he could prevent any one seeing what quantity of gold had been washed out of the stuff; I was sorry I had not the pleasure of meeting him more than once, and then only for a short time, for, from what I could hear, he was without doubt the best practical mining geologist in the country, and I should be more inclined to put reliance upon any thing he stated with respect to gold working, than any person out there; if it is possible for Companies to succeed Mr. H. is the man to turn it to advantage, and should he say nay! I should bow to his superior judgment.

Various have been the surmises about gold, as to whether it would not fall in value, by the enormous amount now found in so many parts of the world. It may not perhaps be generally known that the consumption of gold annually in the works of art and manufactures, exceeds six millions sterling,

Digitized by Google

including Europe and North America; upwards of £300,000 are annually used in Birmingham alone; 31,200 ounces are annually used for gold leaf in the United Kingdom; 10,000 ounces for the electrotype processes, &c. One house at the Potteries employs nearly 1000 ounces, and another between 600 and 700—At the Porcelain manufactories in Staffordshire from 8000 to 10,000 ounces are used annually.

France consumes it is stated upwards of 14,000,000 francs per annum of gold and silver.

The natural wear and tear of gold coin is said to be ½ per cent (this, however, some imagine, is too great an allowance); and when the great demand that exists on the Continent for English sovereigns, in consequence of so few countries possessing a gold currency is considered, it must surely take many years to cause a fall in the value.

Numerous are the claimants as to being the first discoverers of gold in Australia.

Sir R. Murchison when addressing the Geographical Society in 1844, alluded to the possibility of gold being discovered in the Eastern chain of Australia. The Rev. W. B. Clarke announced the same years ago, and in fact discovered gold I believe on the Macquarie River, or in that neighbourhood. A shepherd named McGregor as far back as twenty years ago, used to bring quartz gold in annually, and sell it to a Jew in Sydney. A Mr. Smith who was engaged with iron works in

Digitized by Google

some part of the country, having seen Sir R. Murchison's report in the papers in 1849, made a search and discovered it; he sent it to the Government, offering to disclose the secret, upon the payment of £500. His Excellency the Governor not wishing to create a fever without having authentic information declined doing so, at the same time offered I believe to reward Mr. Smith if he would mention the locality, should it be found true; this however he foolishly declined; it therefore remained for Mr. Edmund Hammond Hargraves to astonish the world; returning from California he set out on his expedition, and on the 12th February 1851, discovered gold at the junction of Summerhill and Lewis Ponds Creeks, about thirty miles from Bathurst, and not very far from where Mr. Clarke found it on the Macquarie.

Government rewarded Mr. Hargraves with £500, and appointed him a Commissioner of Crown Lands. The Turon became known in June, and Louisa Creek in the following month, it was at this place that the 106 pound lump of gold in the matrix, was found by a black shepherd, and shewn to Dr. Kerr. This occasioned some rather ludicrous caricatures to be drawn representing "*frightful cases of fever*," hair standing up on end, with eyes staring almost out of their heads, having a sort of demoniacal grin partially from delight, and partially from a fear that some one should see them; totally forgetting the use of a razor; substituting the blue

Digitized by Google

frock for a frock coat, &c.; strange dreams of Midas pelting them with lumps of gold, and rocking children of the soil with golden locks, &c.

Buninyong, in Victoria, was first heard of about August; Ballarat and Mount Alexander, early in September.

By whom gold was first discovered in Victoria I never could exactly make out, many claiming the right of being the first; however, I believe a shepherd, near the Pyrenees, was the first who brought it into Melbourne from that neighbourhood.

At Mount Alexander, a boy, it is said, who was hut-keeper at one of Dr. Barker's out-stations, brought some shining stuff in to be shown, which originated a gold-field in that district.

A gentleman, residing near the Bendigo Creek, scratching with his knife one day, turned up a piece of gold, and mentioning the circumstance to his men, they had a nice feed from this *dainty* dish for some time, one of their wives, however, telling it most *confidentially* to her neighbour's wife, who mentioned it as a great *secret* to a most particular friend, who of course *only* told it to one other, and so it went on until everybody knew it, and such a *repast* was never feasted on in the world before. This was one of the places where, for the first six months or a year probably, that there was not one man in ten, who did not do well, and I think those not succeeding were of the "ne'er do well" species.

Digitized by Google

The Eagle Hawk was discovered by a bullock driver, who spied a nugget at the foot of a tree.

Some wandering shearers, washing the sand in a tin plate, opened the treasures of Friar's Creek.

A man, idling away time by pulling up roots of grass, discovered a nest of *beauties* (nuggets), which place was christened Golden Gully.

In the neighbourhood of Melbourne, at a place called Anderson's Creek, gold was also found; the Jim Crow Ranges, and Clunes Diggings, and Daisy Hill, together with other small places, were also attracting attention.

In November last year, a tremendous rush took place for Mount Korong (*vide* Chart), about fifty miles from the Bendigo, across the River Loddon. There had been several people working for a long time in this neighbourhood, and upon one occasion it got whispered about amongst the diggers that I was in the secret, which made many hundreds come and ask me if I would tell them. At the time, I had never even heard of the locality, however a general start took place, from the fact of a person arriving in Melbourne, with the most beautiful looking gold that had ever been discovered, and all in large lumps; a gentleman, describing it to me, said it *jingled* like a bell, which make me inclined to think at first it was a hoax, and that it was some of the *Brummagem* gold that had found its way into the Colony, (which was so well made that it was

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

C R R. del. W L Walton, lith

Hollmandel & Walton, Lith.

JUNCTION OF PEGLEG & SAILORS GULLY. BENDIGO

Digitized by Google

some time before it was discovered even by professed mineralogists); however, this was not the case, the gold was perfectly good; perhaps no better instance occurred of the perfect lottery of gold digging. Several parties on the spot at the time, together with a few of the first who followed, made their fortunes almost, but in so small a space was the gold found, that many thousands who went, returned considerable losers in a very short time; doubtless there is gold in the neighbourhood, but it was not considered worth "*prospecting*" for, and they accordingly came back.

This did some people a good turn, the neighbouring squatters getting rid of lots of sheep and cattle, besides one who fortunately had a boat on the Loddon made a small fortune by ferrying; the charge, I was told, being three pounds for crossing a dray, and about five shillings a head, so its an ill wind that blows nobody any good.

The Resident Commissioner of Bendigo (Captain Bull) with a person who was lately appointed Superintendent of Police, (who, from the manner he shewed at once of his possessing determination, tact, and courage, coupled with the strength of a giant, made him a perfect terror to the ruffians), and accompanied by Mr. R. Rede, (Assistant-Commissioner) with a strong body of foot and mounted police, went and established a station there; the same sorts of vagabondism prevailed as usual whenever new dig-

Digitized by Google

gings were discovered, however, the name of Armstrong (the Superintendent) quieted them a little.

The water in this part of the country is extremely scarce in summer, but I heard that they might prove good winter diggings; the quartz crystals found in this neighbourhood were clearer than any I saw elsewhere. Coming home suddenly, in consequence of a severe accident I sustained, I never thought of collecting any specimens, which were almost daily being observed by some one or the other; these doubtless might have been acceptable to our Museums; or perhaps scientific gentlemen might have given some interesting lectures upon them; not only quartz containing gold, but numbers of other sorts which were beautiful, some resembling the inside of grottoes beset with crystals, which by a little human art, might be made to resemble diamonds. There was one specimen of auriferous quartz of this description, which certainly surpassed all I ever saw, it was a piece of frosted looking gold suspended from the top of the entrance of the grotto, with veins like little rivers on a map running from it; its intrinsic value I do not think was more than fifteen or twenty pounds, but I don't think two hundred would have bought it.

In a hole that was dug in the White Horse Hill, near to where the Victoria nugget was found, (by two men who went down nearly a hundred feet, and were unsuccessful in finding gold), several very

Digitized by Google

pretty and rather curious specimens were turned up; sandstone with large crystals stuck on one side were amongst others, also quartz of almost every colour.

It never came to my knowledge that any fossil remains of plants or animals had ever been found, but the generality of diggers would never take any notice of such things, not supposing they would bring gold or cash to them, which is the all-absorbing topic in most colonies; this reminds me of a person who asked, soon after I landed in New Zealand, whether I had got any seeds, replying that I had some rare specimens of *flower* seeds; "Flower seeds," said he, (quite disgusted), "what's the use of them, who cares about flowers? there's no *money* to be made by them; this was one of the wealthiest colonists, and although hospitable, seemed not to care about anything that did not bring in money, this, however, I am happy to say, is not the universal opinion.

The next place of any importance that has turned out to be a very rich gold field is in the neighbourhood of the Ovens River, near to the head of the Murray, many people had been digging there a long time, and either kept it quietly to themselves if they were doing well, or else it did not pay them much for a long time; however, in October last a great migration took place from the other gold fields for the new El Dorado, which was situated about 150 miles to the eastward.

Digitized by Google

The peculiarity of the gold found here is, that it is all exceedingly fine dust, I do not recollect hearing of any *nuggets* having been discovered. It was one of those places which, from the mountainous neighbourhood (being close to the Australian Alps), and the general appearance of the country, was foretold by some, that in all probability it would be found there in greater quantities than elsewhere.

To obtain gold here requires men with the constitution of a lion; the labour, I heard, was nothing any where else to be compared to it, and several told me who had come overland from Sydney, that they found it would be more than their health would permit, from not being the most robust, and they preferred rubbing along, provided good wages could be made, digging any where else;* but for all that, there was abundance of gold.

The proximity to Australia's Alps, causes the gullies generally to have a stream of water always running through them, and the gold was mostly found, I believe, in a kind of soapy stuff, in the beds of the creeks; to get at it, you had constantly to be in the water, consequently bringing on severe colds, rheumatisms, &c., &c. I regret to see the papers since I left mentioning the names of several respectable people, who died from the effects of exposure; and, doubtless, many others have gone to their last

* People considered it making *good* wages if they earned a pound a day digging.

Digitized by Google

homes, without ever being heard of by any but their mates, who have put them between two pieces of bark, and popped them into the first hole that was vacant, without any farther ceremony, never even knowing their name, beyond Jack, Tom, Harry, or, perhaps, *Yorky*, if a Yorkshireman; *Lanky*, for Lancashire; *Scotty*, for a Scotchman, &c.

Mr. J. M. Clow from Bendigo was selected for this district as the Assistant Commissioner, with the universal good wish of his brother A. C.'s that he would thereby obtain promotion, being one of those gentlemen who never considered anything too troublesome, provided it was a duty,—energetic and persevering, coupled with coolness and, at the same time, that determination of character, which made him respected by all, diggers as well as others, and reports have reached me since I landed in England which verified the opinion that was entertained at the time; I have not yet seen the Melbourne papers mentioning the account, but from what I have heard, a policeman had shot a digger through the head, either accidentally or on purpose, when sent in by one of the Assistant Commissioners to put a man out of a claim, which he had decided against him; if he attempted *enforcing* a thing with only *one* orderly, it certainly was very foolish—and I only wonder, when the man was shot, that both of them (Commissioner and trooper) were not murdered outright; I believe the policeman was very nearly *lynched*, had not Mr. Clow arrived and reasoned

Digitized by Google

with the people—they listened, and he saved the man's life; doubtless, however, the full particulars will appear ere long.

An escort was very soon required for the Ovens, and both Government and private ones brought down considerable quantities of gold; the general impressions were, that the Ovens' diggings would prove second to none, but that they could only be worked during the summer months.

The discovery of the enormous lumps of 134, 97, and 83 pounds *weight*, in the Canadian gully at Ballarat, will doubtless have relieved the Ovens of a good deal of its population; the distance from Melbourne was about 180 miles, and the carriage at one time was £180 per ton; it would be eating golden cakes in reality, I think, with flour from £30 to £50 per ton in Melbourne, besides the profit the store-keeper would require; however, this being near the New South Wales country, which was of earlier date than Victoria, with consequently more towns in the back districts, might assist a little in keeping markets down; however, from what I heard, the country about Albury, which lies just across the Murray, did not produce wheat anything like sufficient for the diggers at the Ovens.

The actual quantity of gold obtained never has been known, and perhaps never will be ascertained —people say, that it is sure to be known by the quantity exported; but it strikes me very forcibly that far more comes home in every vessel than is

Digitized by Google

ever mentioned in the manifest; no one, save the owner of the gold, being aware of it, who could easily put a bag-full into every box, without any one being a bit the wiser, also most people returning bring a few specimens to shew their friends; and no matter whether it is only valued at one pound or five thousand, it is the produce of the colony—and, I imagine, it would be under the mark if I allowed a thousand ounces only for every ship to bring home, besides what might appear on her manifest.

The escorts were no criterion at all, for so much came down by private hands.

From some new regulations that have been made by the Government of New South Wales, it has driven great numbers of diggers from thence to the Victoria district; though none had been put in force when I left.

Every new or great discovery in any of the Colonies causes a great fluctuation in the labour markets; before the rains set in on the 1st of May, 1852, labour was plentiful at a pound and thirty shillings per week; but after the rains, it was scarcely to be obtained at any price; a falling off took place in the quantity of gold obtained towards the latter end of the year at the Bendigo, making numbers seek other employment; this, coupled with the immense immigration (at the rate of 2000 a-week), caused it to be overstocked again; so much so, that an acquaintance of mine told me he had taken some extra men for a few days, who were

Digitized by Google

glad to come for their food alone; also an industrious carpenter, with his wife and two daughters, had engaged themselves for a time, the two former at two guineas a-week, and the two latter at the rate of 30*s* per month; these people, doubtless, did not know where to put their heads, not having a tent, and every place being crammed, people sometimes paid five shillings for sleeping on a table. Government certainly at this time were giving 10*s* per diem to men for repairing the roads; but, from the high price of provisions and lodgings, a man could not put by much more than a pound per week; this, however, was no criterion respecting wages, as labour was required but for a limited period; from the best authority that I could obtain, I learned that plenty of men were to be got for £30 a-year, as shepherds, &c., and married couples at £35 to £50, besides their rations. Mechanics, however, could generally do better—blacksmiths, wheelwrights, sawyers, bricklayers, stonemasons, &c. always could earn their pound a-day.

From some reason or other, settlers did not like employing fresh arrivals, or else at the registry offices in town they pretended such was the case; perhaps it might have been with a view to beat people down; hearing so many say at various times, when coming to the camps on the diggings to ask for work, that they could not get employment—at the same time, seeing the papers full of such advertisements, one would imagine the very description of men now applying were required; one par-

Digitized by Google

ticularly, who was a strong healthy young fellow, about twenty-four years of age, from one of the midland counties, said he'd been accustomed to sheep and horses, shearing, &c. all his life. He told me he had applied the day he landed at a Registry Office, and that the registrar would not have him at any price; wishing to see if such were really the case, I went one day, just prior to leaving the colony, to one of these offices, and heard a man grumbling, and cursing the day he ever left England to come to such a hole, and being deceived in the idea that labourers were so much in demand, &c. Guessing from his provincial dialect that he was an East Riding man, I said, "I reckon you'd like to back *oop-u't wauds* (upon the wolds) *agin?*" "Eh marry," said he, "mah wod if ah could but get back I'd ne'er leave it for all t' *gowld* i't counthree." He told me he had heard so much in the papers at home about wages being so high, and having been accustomed to sheep all his life, thought there was a chance of his getting something to better himself, so came out.

Many, however, emigrated, who would sooner starve almost than take employment under what was considered the highest wages for any description of work.

The immense population that was daily increasing towards the middle and latter part of last year, and the papers containing every day some sad case of the wretchedness of poor creatures just landed,

Digitized by Google

caused subscriptions to be raised for the purpose of building temporary houses for the new comers, or at all events for those in poorer circumstances of life. All the space on the south side of the Yarra was covered with tents, each having to pay a certain sum to Government for the use of the ground.

In February this year, another "change came o'er the spirit of the dream;" the discovery of the lump weighing *one hundred and thirty pounds* of solid gold set all the *fever* raging again, and from letters I have since seen, Melbourne was in a few days almost deserted, and I should imagine that the road between Mount Alexander and Ballarat was now as well marked as that from London to York, though perhaps not *quite* so good as the old North road.

Men vacated their daily employ, sailors all bolted from their ships, and the whole place was in the same excited state as at first; every one now expecting to find a piece of a *ton* weight perhaps; what it may be at this present moment no one can tell, such sudden changes take place. The papers have announced that many died in Melbourne from sheer exhaustion, being unable to rough it in the manner they are obliged; perhaps in a few months hence we shall hear that our Transatlantic brethren have overstocked the markets with lumber, and that wooden houses will be lying on the beach, wanting people to erect them; such was the case in California, and why should it not be so in Australia? and I have no doubt the Galvanized Iron Company

Digitized by Google

have not been behindhand in sending houses of their manufacture.

I perceive companies have been formed here in England for the purpose of building houses in the colony, but I am inclined to think they will be too late; had such a scheme been commenced, and a number of wooden or iron houses sent out twelve or eighteen months ago, well and good; they would then doubtless have paid remarkably well; but the value of land has now increased so enormously that any one might almost imagine the price asked to be fictitious, though there is every probability of town allotments going even still higher. To give some little idea of the value of land, I will instance that one day a place was shewn to me at Collingwood (one of the suburbs of Melbourne) which about three years ago had been purchased for £800, and now £40,000 could be obtained for it if the party chose to sell; whether they would be right in selling or not is doubtful, but it certainly appears a very tempting offer, as cent per cent might be made of that money long before the land is worth fifty per cent more; I think if such a piece of good luck had ever fallen to my lot I should have been inclined to realize, for those sudden rises in all descriptions of property generally have a fall sooner or later; however, this is not likely to be the case so long as gold is found in the same abundance; but I think it would be over sanguine to imagine that it will be found for many years by the present system of digging,

Digitized by Google

though doubtless *systematic* mining will be profitably continued for twenty or thirty years afterwards, by which time those who have had good luck in the palmy days of digging will then, if alive, be the owners of large agricultural or pastoral establishments, and enable them to employ plenty of people instead of working themselves.

Rather a curious story connected with the discovery of gold in Australia is current in the colony.

"About forty years ago a convict displayed a quantity of gold, who was immediately handcuffed and taken before the magistrate, and on being asked how he became possessed of it, said, he had *found it*; 'Found it!' said the magistrate (most indignant at the man's trying to impose such a falsehood upon him by way of excuse) 'then I'll find something else for you,' ordering him to receive fifty lashes on his bare back with a thief's cat-o'-nine tails."

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTMAS AT BENDIGO—THE CLIMATE—AGREEABLE TENT COMPANIONS—MR. TOLMER—RAILWAY NAVVIES—MOUNT ALEXANDER RAILWAY—RAILWAYS TO GEELONG AND WILLIAM'S TOWN—RAILWAY VIA KILMORE—GEELONG TO BALLARAT—AN IMAGINARY WIDOW—WOOL AND CATTLE TRAFFIC—GOVERNMENT WOULD FORWARD MAILS—COAL—SEEING IS BELIEVING—BOATS WELL EMPLOYED—SEAMEN—WILLIAM'S TOWN DOCK OR QUAY—GREAT WANT OF A WATER COMPANY—NUISANCES IN MELBOURNE—GAS—BARRACOUTA—FISH IN SYDNEY—THE GREAT BRITAIN—ENTERTAINMENT ON BOARD—TAHITI AND TÔGA-TABU—NEW ZEALAND ROUTE—NECESSITY FOR SCHOOLS—WHETHER FOR A PERMANENCY.

On the whole, Christmas at the Bendigo passed off pretty quietly, but the innumerable and rather ludicrous schemes that were attempted to smuggle liquor by wholesale on to the diggings were rather amusing, and the police magistrate had his hands full all day from the many seizures made; a son of the Emerald Isle bringing up a dray loaded with casks of salt pork, had a smaller one holding about ten gallons, *nately* made to fit inside each, and covered by the pork; a certain part of a *lady's* dress (name supposed to be unknown to gentlemen) was also converted into a receptacle for rum!

Amongst other tricks adopted by some of the scamps on the diggings are taking a bag full of shot and depositing it at the gold office, obtaining

Digitized by Google

the Commissioner's receipt as if it were a bag of gold, when they immediately go to a store-keeper, and offer it for sale at a lower price than is being generally given, who (until they were made aware of it by getting severely bit) too readily purchased it, and after transmitting the same to their agents in town, were rather surprised and mortified to hear of the *valuable* contents of the bag; upon an occasion one of these *gentlemen* came, and handed in a bag of this sort, but the Commissioner was rather too old a soldier, and feeling convinced that a bag of such a size must weigh heavier if filled with gold, commenced opening it, whereupon the owner decamped, and took to his heels as hard as he well could. A "hue and cry" was instantly raised, when the whole *army* of pensioners, police, gold escort, together with all the dogs in camp, went in full chase; the veteran sons of Mars ran into him first, and so *affectionately* did they embrace him, that I only wonder how he escaped from being strangled; on their return to the gold office, the gallant Commissioner, in dismissing his troops displayed such generalship, that he could only be compared to Bombastes Furioso, when he cried out, "Begone, brave army, and don't kick up such a row."

There are great differences of opinion respecting the healthiness or unhealthiness of the Australian climate, but I never enquired of any medical men whether there was much sickness, but always got for answer, "Yes, a good deal." Undertakers here

Digitized by Google

also have no more cause of complaint than they have at Calcutta during a *good* cholera season. Asking any half dozen people whether they liked the climate, three would say it was the most abominably hot, dusty place they ever put foot into; and the other three would have a different opinion, and delight in the hot weather, though they would abuse the *dust* (excepting gold.) For my own part I do not think it either *particularly* healthy or unhealthy, but disliking excessive heat at any time, I would not wish to be compelled to live either in Victoria or New South Wales all my life. Had I only these two countries to choose between, I should give the preference to the latter, but would sooner be doomed to live in India than either, for certainly no place can possess fewer luxuries than Victoria. New South Wales is a little better, but to keep cool in hot weather is almost impossible, unless by adopting the numerous appliances as in India, where the same is accomplished.

The climate of Van Diemen's Land is much cooler, and the favourite locality of most people; for an account of that colony I must refer my readers to Mrs. Meredith's last publication, "My Home in Tasmania."

This island may equal, but never can surpass New Zealand, for I cannot help pronouncing the latter country as the healthiest in the world. Persons with either large or small capital, if they only carry *industry* with it, cannot help doing well, and will not have many doctor's bills to pay; neither will

Digitized by Google

they fail to obtain a good share of the gold after being coined, even should they fail of finding it in the natural state in the colony itself; some however has lately been discovered near Auckland. I think from what I have seen of the Australian gold fields, there are several places I passed during my wanderings of some thousands of miles in New Zealand that will produce gold, but it will be hard work to procure it, owing to the superabundance of water making it too much resemble the Ovens diggings.

Amongst other disagreeable things, that people living under canvas in the bush have to put up with in the Australian colonies, are the reptiles, which are not only a nuisance, but extremely dangerous; one morning, after a heavy rain at Myers Creek, my companion called me to see a *beautiful* snake with a red head, comfortably coiled up under the lining of his tent, and an immense one was also caught at the same time by one of the police; the first was a deadly poisonous one, but not so the latter, nevertheless they are very unpleasant companions; upon another occasion, feeling something tickling my knee, and turning up my trousers, I found a centipede about three and a half inches long; fortunately, he mistook the trousers for my leg, and bit them, otherwise I should doubtless have had an *agreeable* time of it for a few weeks.

There is no way of keeping ants out of a tent, which in general are fortunately not of the worst description; *I* never at all events found soldiers or riflemen, as they are termed, inside any tent

Digitized by Google

of mine. A horrible story was told me of some bushrangers in former days, catching a policeman who had been very active in capturing ruffians, binding him hand and foot, then throwing him on to a soldier-ant's nest; the agonies the man must have died in cannot be conceived, the bite from one almost driving a person mad.

These things, however, are never found in New Zealand, the only reptile indigenous is a small lizard, and a rat is the only animal, although the Norway one has been imported; a small black spider, with a red spot on his back, is the only insect that is venomous; its bite is very painful, quite paralyzing people sometimes for two or three days, but I never heard of any European dying from it, though the natives assert they have known instances of death.

Through the indefatigability of a Mr. Tolmer of Adelaide, an escort has been established to go overland from thence to Mount Alexander; the gold is conveyed on packhorses, each trooper leading two, and every horse carrying from 100 to 150 lbs. weight of gold. Mr. Tolmer certainly deserves the thanks of the Adelaide people, for most of the South Australian colonists send their gold there in preference to Melbourne; the charge made by Government, I think, is two per cent by this escort. Latterly, during the fine seasons, it has been accomplished in eleven days, the distance about 600 miles; in winter it is dreadful, for days together they have to travel nearly up to their knees in

Digitized by Google

water; on the arid parts wells have been sunk to obtain water in the summer time; great numbers of people now bring their drays and families all the way overland, and return in the same manner, without ever going near Melbourne.

Escorts have also been started from Sydney *vid* Albury to the Ovens, so as to accommodate their own diggers, as well as to get the gold from Victoria into their own metropolis.

Advertisements are appearing in some of the London papers, requiring several hundred railway navvies to proceed to Sydney, doubtless with a view of completing the railway in progress from thence towards Goulburn, which in the course of time will certainly be extended through Yass to Albury, the traffic to and from which place must be immense, connecting the Ovens diggings in Victoria with the principal port in New South Wales. It may perhaps be considered by some that the population in the colonies at this present time, does not call for an outlay of capital to such an extent as railways require, and that it would not pay the shareholders a dividend; however, it strikes me very forcibly that if the colonists of Victoria are not "up and stirring," they will lose an immense deal, if something similar is not thought about there, for Sydney will supply the Ovens district with the articles that ought to go from Melbourne.

Railways are certainly spoken about, between Geelong and Melbourne, also from Melbourne to

Digitized by Google

Williams' Town in Hobson's Bay, together with one from Melbourne to Mount Alexander; but I think it must be allowed that *through* lines are always more likely to pay better than short bits, particularly when the engineering difficulties are not so great, no matter whether they are to be intended for locomotive steam engines, or merely a tram-way for horse power. Every one who has ever been to Mount Alexander, must be well aware, that very great expense must accrue from the immense cuttings, viaducts, &c. that must of necessity be made for a line running over the country as now laid down; and would it not be far better to have the opinions of the most able, scientific, and practical engineers respecting which line of country should be adopted, capable of obtaining the same objects in view, together with those which will not only benefit shareholders, but the public generally?

If a line is made to Mount Alexander by the present route, there it must stop, for where is the outlet? unless it may be possible to carry it through the Korong country, towards Maiden's Punt, on the Murray, where it may be advantageous when the navigation of the river is complete; but is Mount Alexander the only place to be considered? Are not the Ovens' Diggings to be thought of? Is it not whispered that gold has been found to some extent near Seymour, on the Goulburn, and all the country in fact about there? Would not a line in that direction, connecting it with Albury, make a

Digitized by Google

through line from Sydney to Melbourne? and when run for the first fifty miles, (forming but a small deviation from the present one spoken about, to Mount Alexander,) over an almost *dead level* country, excepting three or four miles at the last, I cannot but imagine it would benefit all parties considerably more.

The owners of property at Gisborne, Kyneton, &c. might complain of their losing the traffic by that road, but as I am not writing to advocate any particular interest, (at the same time have no wish to injure any one), I merely state what in my own opinion is best for the public good, and with those ideas feel confident in being supported by many of the most highly respectable, influential, and wealthy gentlemen connected with the colony, a great many of whom are now in England for a short time, and it is to those gentlemen I would more particularly address this plan, hoping, however, that they will not consider it amounting to dictation on the part of one who would only be considered a *newchum* in Australia, over those with more experience; also, I trust they will not patronize any *bubble* schemes that might be got up merely to suit jobbing purposes in England, but support *bonâ fide* ones.

The lines from Melbourne to William's Town and Geelong are all well enough, but the main point about which I wish to say a few words is, connecting the interior of the country with the ports.

Digitized by Google

From the conversation I have had with several gentlemen upon the subject, I understand that nearly all the way to Kilmore (the Melbourne and Sydney mail road) is a level country, with the exception of the last few miles, and by winding through the valleys this difficulty might be partially overcome; the main line then to continue on, through Seymour, and by Violet Town, to the crossing place on the Broken River, which, if it went no further at first, would pass over all the country, where drays in the winter are stuck; beyond this the mountainous parts of the country commence, difficulties and greater expenses would have to be incurred, the country would require well exploring to ascertain the best places to proceed with the line, carrying it by, or near Reedy Creek diggings (the principal ones in the Ovens neighbourhood) to the River Murray, opposite to Albury.

If it should only reach Broken River, which is no great distance from the Ovens, what an advantage it would be to Melbourne, having the communication so much better than at present.

From Kilmore, a deviation from the main line to be made to Mount Alexander, in the form of the letter Y, and extend to the Loddon, in the neighbourhood of Mount Korong, and subsequently to Maiden's Punt, if the traffic should require it; this would be bringing all the Northern diggings within a couple of days' journey of Melbourne, *if* with *horse* power only; but with steam, within a few hours.

Digitized by Google

Another line in connexion with the Melbourne and Geelong Railway could be made from the latter place to Buninyong and Ballarat, extending, if required, to Castlemaine or Castleton,* on the Bendigo, where it would form a junction with the former line.

It may be said that I have taken too *extensive* a view, and that it would be impossible to get people to make these lines in the next fifty years, but every one may not be aware, that there are certain times in many places, that the miners cannot work at the Gold-fields, in consequence of the extreme heavy rains, or *vice versâ*, the great droughts preventing them getting sufficient water, at all events for washing the soil. Would not these men gladly take good contracts if offered at these times, particularly when they know how greatly it must benefit them, by getting flour carried at £5, or £10, or even £20 a ton, instead of £180, which has been the charge for carriage to the Ovens, (I mention flour, but *every* thing else is in the same ratio.)

The numbers of anxious minds that there are, and have been, would be relieved by quick communication; in the first place, men sending their gold down one day would hear of its safe arrival in town, together with the sale of it, &c. and the amount paid to his account at the bank by the next day's post. Three times was I asked during the first trip I made to the Mount, to go and leave

* I believe this place is to be called Sandhurst.

Digitized by Google

word, or inquire at some store for different people, and tell them their husbands were on the road back. One man said, he had been within a mile of where he was for *a month,* in consequence of the roads being in so bad a state. I found his poor wife with a large family, almost in the last state of despair, not knowing what had become of her husband, imagining he was murdered, or something had happened, never having heard of him since he left, when he only intended being absent a week, instead of which he had been gone *six;* poor creature! her delight and gratitude can be better imagined than described when I informed her of his whereabouts; doubtless hundreds of people have similarly missed each other. Look at the loss of time and labour these people, for instance, have been subjected to for want of something like a railroad. Another time a poor woman came to ask me whether I had ever *heard* of her husband? that he had left Adelaide three months before her; she had come to join him, with some little children, and nowhere could he be found; he was personally known to many she had seen, but nobody could give any tidings, or had ever heard of him. Several used to come, and ask me to take down their names, and direct their families where to find them when arriving; they could then write home, and inform them at whose station they would get intelligence; but this poor creature's husband had never been seen, and the chances were he might have been killed

Digitized by Google

or drowned, and the wife was then wandering about, not knowing what to do, or where to put her head. Had there been anything like a rail, it might have been different; she might have preferred hearing of his death, sooner than remain in such a state of suspense. Numbers of instances I could name of the same sort, but a recapitulation of so many bearing on the same subject, would become too tedious.

Men working by the job would doubtless much sooner complete it than by the day, for if people got daily wages, there would be but little progress made.

I have not much doubt that the mining population would take a large interest in the concern, if they imagined it was under a right direction, which of course is the great point; bad management in that, like anything else, must prove disastrous.

Leaving the diggings out of the question, during the wool season there would be an enormous traffic upon these lines, traversing as they will, immense grazing districts; and would not the squatters send their fat sheep and cattle to market by the railway, sooner than have to drive them through heat and dust during summer, or bogs in the winter, making them, by the time they arrive in town, as miserable as possible, and scarcely fit for the butcher.

Towns, doubtless, would spring up in the various localities; those that are now laid down, and have about a dozen houses, would contain their thousand; all property adjacent to it would rise in value. Are not country places so in England, and why should it not be the case here? Government would sell the

Digitized by Google

allotments better, and without doubt be too glad to forward the mails by such a conveyance, instead of by *my friend* of the Black Forest.

I feel certain that the day will be hailed with delight when a railroad is opened in the Colony of Victoria, or, in fact, anywhere in Australia, and enable hundreds to run up to Melbourne or Sydney, or down into the country, to transact business, and see their friends, &c. a little oftener, and with less trouble, than they now do. I know there are many ladies and others now in the country, who would go about much more frequently, if it were not for the trouble, and inconveniences they are sometimes subjected to on the journey, from getting an upset, axles of the dog cart breaking, and half-a-dozen other little *amusing* circumstances, such as being *bailed up*, robbed, &c. Not many months ago, a lady with her husband, and several others, were all tied up to a tree by a gang of ruffians, and robbed; not, however, that railways would have saved them in this instance; still such things are likely to occur, at places where they might be prevented; and those poor creatures who were my fellow companions when upset in the mail, through the carelessness of the driver when going to the Turon! would have been spared the injuries they received. Certainly accidents do occur at times on railways; however, that does not prevent people from travelling by them; everything is subject to accident.

It may be asked, What are they going to do for

Digitized by Google

coal; there is none in Victoria, certainly, but does any one say it is never to be discovered? Who ever thought five years ago of finding gold there? Newcastle, or Hunter's River, in New South Wales, has coal; Port Arthur, in Van Diemen's Land, also contains it; likewise Massacre Bay, in New Zealand, which I understand has lately been found *far* superior than was anticipated. Surely it would answer putting coal instead of ballast into all ships going from England, or even freighting them with coal expressly. I believe it is thus sent round Cape Horn to Valparaiso, and the west coast of America, therefore, why not send it to Australia.

As a final consideration respecting railways, would it not give immediate employment to the thousands who are now hurrying out (and which emigration is likely to continue), thereby preventing them sending home the letters, copies of which every week may be seen in some of the provincial papers giving the dreadful accounts they do, mentioning how they have been imposed upon, that they are, in fact, literally starving, or were when they wrote; I have myself been shewn one letter to that effect—besides, I could not help being of opinion before leaving, that there must be distress before long; people will then be worse off than they were at home, unless they have got friends to help them on; certainly, the accounts from the miners that have appeared in some of the London papers within the last day or two, are happily, more encouraging. I therefore trust those

Digitized by Google

who were starving, have found occupation ; *seeing* however is believing—and from what I have read in papers so repeatedly about the prosperity of such and such diggings, I am rather sceptical; knowing at the time when these accounts were dated, that there was as much bad as good luck existing, and that the good news only had been sent—the numbers who had been unlucky were never taken into consideration. As the author of a rather amusing little pamphlet published in Australia says, "The world only want to know about the *fortunate* diggers; therefore, we never make any inquiry or say a word about the unfortunate ones, although cases are as plentiful as blackberries, of people being at the mines for several months who have never earned a penny." Notwithstanding, no place or people (except, perhaps, San Francisco) ever became so suddenly rich as the people in Melbourne ; I have been told by gentlemen connected with banking establishments that they did not consider but that even the poorest tradesman in the town had £5000 on the *credit* side of his account ; and it is to these people whom I would say, *now* is the time for *investing* some portion of your capital to assist in the advancement of your adopted country, which will return you, or those that come after you, a good interest for the outlay.

From the number of improvements that appear almost necessary for Melbourne, it may not perhaps be out of place mentioning some in this volume,

Digitized by Google

which if not particularly interesting or amusing to all my readers, may still be so to some, who have friends, and are otherwise concerned in the welfare of the Colony. Besides, to other capitalists at home, who may be inclined to invest money out there, in what may appear to be likely, returning a moderately good, if not a *handsome* interest.

One of the principal things to be considered in any Colony is the port, and what means are best to be adopted to perfect that which Dame Nature has not herself made to answer the requirements of man—and, certainly, a considerable drawback to Victoria, is the fact of the town being so far from the anchorage where the large shipping lay. Melbourne lies on the northern bank of the river Yarra-yarra, up which vessels of a light draught of water only can go; but the large ships must remain in Hobson's Bay—and they are for weeks and months sometimes before they can get cleared. I do not mean by this that it is *universally* the case, but it happens repeatedly; I have myself been into a shop in Melbourne to ask for an article of some sort, when the shopman has said they had plenty in the *bay*, but when they would be landed, it was impossible to say—the ship having been already *six* weeks in the harbour.

Every description of boat, with small craft of all sorts, were discharging these ships, and reaping of course, a fine harvest—just working when they chose, and taking a spell when they chose; nobody could blame people in doing what they liked with their own;

Digitized by Google

but great losses might occur, and doubtless have occurred, from this cause. A vessel, for instance, might come in leaky, and before her cargo could possibly be discharged, it would all be spoilt; people in trade may lose the chance of a market for goods, which, had they been on shore a week previous, might have saved them thousands of pounds; then again, ships for England cannot load and meet their engagements to sail on a certain day; first of all because they could not get discharged, and in the second place, because they could not get their wool, &c. off to the ship, consequently have to remain four or five months at least, in harbour, longer than ever they ought—and, I do not think I should be far wrong in saying, a year; many might urge it was on account of not being able to procure men; this was the case at first, but the Commander of the "Statesman," the ship I came home in, said there were plenty of men to be hired for ships coming to England, at £45 for the run; but there was a great disinclination on the part of seamen, to ship for India, or other Oriental ports. The delay is more occasioned, from the want of places where ships can haul alongside, to either load or discharge cargo—and this is one of the great advantages which Sydney has over Melbourne; for there may be seen large first-class ships, such as the "Blackwall," "Vimiera," "General Hewitt," &c. lying alongside Campbells, and the circular wharfs, just the same as in the London docks.

Digitized by Google

It remains therefore to be considered which is the best plan, both for economy and everything else to obviate the difficulty now existing with relation to the Port in Victoria; doubtless the railroad to Williams Town will mitigate the inconvenience considerably, but could not any of the talented engineers of the present day devise a plan conjointly with the railway to remedy the whole more effectually? Great difficulties had to be contended with in making the Plymouth Breakwater, still they were overcome, and I cannot conceive it impossible that something similar in the shape of a quay could not be extended from the lighthouse into the bay, or a dock, so that vessels might haul alongside to discharge and load, goods could then be sent up immediately by rail to Melbourne, a distance of some six or seven miles.

Mention has been made, meetings held, and schemes proposed, for making a ship canal from the south side of the Yarra to Liardet's beach opposite to the lighthouse, and I believe to run out a wharf from thence, but the reports of the engineer were not satisfactory, inasmuch as when ascertaining, by boring, what was the nature of the subsoil, too many quicksands were discovered, which would be almost an endless expense endeavouring to overcome, and would most likely require the whole to be built of solid masonry, which would take too many years to complete. This plan I believe has been submitted to His Excellency Sir William Denison, Governor of Van Diemen's Land, soliciting his advice upon

Digitized by Google

the subject, he being considered the most talented engineer in the Southern Colonies; if a wharf were thrown out from Liardet's beach, vessels never could lie alongside, being a dead lee shore —and I consider the idea absurd; whichever plan may be hereafter determined upon, it will confer an immense benefit to the whole of the mercantile community as well as the public generally; squatters will not lose good opportunities of disposing of their wool in the London markets through the vexatious delay which sometimes occurs before they can get their produce shipped.

Another great inconvenience to which the Town and suburbs of Melbourne are subjected, is the want of a good supply of water, every house in the place has to put up with whatever price the water carriers choose to ask; for having to take it about a quarter or half a mile they would merely demand the small sum of *five* shillings; at Collingwood about one and a half mile distant from the watering place they ask *ten* shillings. Surely some of the wealthy men might be inclined to speculate a little money in a Water Company, or the Council might be induced to vote a sum in the estimates.

As to the under drainage, never was a town so much in want of it, for during heavy rains, a *ferry boat* might almost pay to start in Elizabeth Street, which generally resembles a small river where it cuts through Collins Street, and many a blessing (?) I have heard heaped upon the Corporation in con-

Digitized by Google

sequence, whose duty they considered it to be, looking to such affairs. The general stench when passing butchers' shops, or slaughtering yards is abominable, at some places, in Collingwood more particularly, pass at any time of the day you like, there lies the offal; another circumstance also occurs most offensive to the eye of a stranger, but still at the same time if he were asked what he would do to remedy the evil, he might find himself in a "fix" (as the Yankees would say). If a gentleman having a party of ladies living in Collingwood whom he wishes to accompany *on foot* to hear the band of H. M. 40th Regiment play on the appointed days at the flag staff, it would be highly necessary for him to caution his fair friends as to the thickness of boots and shoes, also to suggest their putting a little "Bouquet de fleurs" on their handkerchiefs, for should it be their wish to walk over to the band in a straight direction, without having to go through the town, they would be required to pass near an extensive labyrinth of heaps, consisting of broken bottles, sweepings of stables, and all other filth from the town, which is carted about a stone's throw from the buildings and then tilted out, the effluvia from which requires rather a strong perfume to overcome; making enquiry one day from a juvenile (who was upsetting a load of manure), by whose order he capsized it there, he facetiously replied that he did not want to be had up before the cove with the *Donkey skin* hat and *white choker*, which would be

Digitized by Google

the case if he emptied it anywhere else, I concluded that he intended his Worship the Mayor. That these circumstances tend to cause disease, I think no one can deny, and it is to be hoped some better system may be adopted for sanitary regulations; or if any such are in existence why are they not carried out, and the delinquents fined for non-compliance.

How many robberies, murders, &c. might be prevented in Melbourne by the introduction of gas I will not venture to conjecture, but I imagine that if lighting London streets was to be discontinued, the informations at Scotland yard would be pretty considerably increased; I feel much inclined to answer for the whole population, or at all events the respectable part of it, that they would be delighted to pay a daily, or rather a nightly rate for such a convenience, not for out of doors only, but within doors, the same as at home; I hear that gas has been sometime established in California, however cannot vouch for the fact, but certainly such a thing would never surprise me, for our Transatlantic friends generally get things *done*, whilst we English are *thinking* about it.

It has appeared rather strange also to me, that during the time when meat, vegetables, flour, and everything else is so exorbitantly high, that no one has ever attempted anything in the shape of a "Fishing scheme;" it might not perhaps suit altogether a merchant taking such a thing in hand, but

Digitized by Google

would surely answer the purpose to many nautical men. If larger tracts of country are not put into cultivation, every thing must go higher than it now is, and if foreign countries supply wheat, (again I must add) away goes the gold in consequence.

Most people will allow that a piece of FISH is not a bad thing at any time, but more particularly would it be valued by way of a change. Can my readers believe that there is a description *of inland lake* (*vide* Port Philip Bay on Chart) adjacent to Melbourne, which literally swarms with fish, but to obtain such a thing in town, offer what you will, is scarcely ever possible, or if obtained by any accident, it generally arises from some vessel having come up to Cole's Wharf, with a few barracouta hanging to her main stay, which was the case on board the schooner belonging to the *great O.P.*; when we arrived, some of the sailors had caught one or two, and were readily offered FIVE SHILLINGS each for them, the *purchasers* thinking at the same time they had got a good bargain. To this subject I would wish to call the attention of some of the *poorer* fishermen of this country, though at the same time should be sorry to hear of any great number going *simply* for that purpose, but it might pay a *hundred parties* handsomely, particularly when railroads get forward, and they can then send fish to the diggings as well as selling it in town; some good boats, from thirty to fifty tons each, with all the gear and fishing tackle, for either

Digitized by Google

trawling, seaning, hook and line fishing, lobster catching, &c. would well repay the adventurers for their trouble, and they would find it much more healthful employment than gold digging, and equally profitable.

Being in Sydney so short a time, I did not take notice respecting the fish market there, but recollect, when in that harbour fifteen years ago, filling the barge belonging to one of Her Majesty's ships up to the thawts with fish, in less than four or five hours, when hauling the sean in the middle harbour, it is only natural to suppose there are plenty still to be found. An amusing circumstance, which I cannot help relating, occurred on one occasion, which was getting a *torpedo*, or electrifying fish, into the net, and *electrifying* every one. Jack imagined he had certainly caught the "old gentleman" that time, and a man, running up with a boarding pike, (which was generally taken to stick sharks when in the net), and running it through the fish to kill him, caused it to *tremble*, and made Jack drop his pike as if shot with a gun.*

One grand point to be established is, which is the best route, and what will be the best description of steamer to shorten the time between London and Australia. Parliamentary Committees have made all the inquiries they could, and the result was, their recommending the route *vid* the Cape of Good

* One of the subscribers to this will doubtless recollect the circumstance.

Digitized by Google

Hope for one line, and from Singapore, in connexion with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, as the other, to run every alternate month. I am not exactly certain whether the Committee recommended *screw* steamers or not, but the line *viâ* the Cape adopted the *screw* principle, and most thoroughly, so far, have they proved themselves *dreadful screws;* the poor Australian got *screwed* up altogether, her gallant Captain got quite disgusted with such a *screw*, and was not, I understand, at all sorry to *unscrew* himself, for he had been previously informed how she would acquit herself. Their Lordships at the Admiralty would not have any more to do with such *screws*, and the consequence was, the withdrawal of the mails from them, through not being able to fulfil the contract they entered into with the Government, and the letters are again sent by sailing vessels instead. The *greatest screw* of all, though unconnected with the Mail Company, was the Great Britain; when nearly reaching the Cape, she bore up for St. Helena, finding at the time that they had not been *screwing* the coal sufficiently and could not proceed; but a most *wonderful discovery* was said to have been made after her arrival home in Liverpool, which was, that she had fifty tons more coal than any one on board was ever aware of, either Captain, Chief Officer, or Engineer, and it is generally imagined they would be an *uncommonly* clever set of fellows if they had, unless it was that

Digitized by Google

the Engineer having a wish to keep up the character of the *great screw*, got himself continually *screwed*, thereby forgetting all about it; if such really was the case, I expect the next time she returns home to hear of a *whale* having been found in the boiler, having *screwed* himself in there to keep warm.

The Company certainly endeavoured one way to prevent people imagining they were altogether *screws*, for a more splendid entertainment never was given in the Bay of Port Philip before, and their hospitality was unbounded; from what I could hear, every one was highly delighted, and a considerable number, patronizing the *screw* principle as a matter of course, got uncommonly *screwed*. It may perhaps not be considered out of place remarking, that they would stand in a much better light if the Company or Agents in the Colony, would have a little more thought for the feelings of ladies, and be a little more cautious whom they select to bring home as passengers in the *cabin;* for if all reports are true, which have reached my ears, she more represented an unmentionable sort of floating house than anything else on the road home, and if some of the passengers could have got on shore, before *clearing* the heads of Port Philip, they would have done so, and sacrificed their money sooner than be compelled to remain in the same ship with such people.

It must be supposed that the subject of steam com-

Digitized by Google

munication was constantly discussed amongst people in the colony, and I almost invariably found men out there to look upon a line either from Panama, in conjunction with the West India mail boats, or a direct line from England to Chagres, as being the most eligible, and likely to meet with the greatest support from the colonists. I must say that a line from Falmouth to Chagres, and (after crossing the Isthmus) Panama to Sydney will succeed the best, let the first steamer touch at the nearest West India island she may pass, if the Company wish.

It may be asked if I would not recommend stopping at Tahiti to coal, to which I would say, certainly, if you like; but do not forget calling at another place *en route* to Sydney, namely, Tôga-Tabu, or Norfolk Island, either one or the other, the former the best, for perhaps the Government would not like vessels approaching the latter on account of its being a penal settlement.

Why touch there? might be exclaimed; because nearly due south is a most important Colony, representing more than 30,000 Englishmen, who are equally anxious to hear of their friends at home as those in Australia, and a Company is now being formed, called the Inter-Colonial Steam Company for New Zealand; which, doubtless, would not at all object running up to that island conveying passengers, letters as well as merchandize; commencing, I will say, from Tôga-tabu, then proceeding

Digitized by Google

to Manakao (for Auckland), Taranaki (New Plymouth), Nelson, Wellington, Canterbury and Otago, returning *viâ* Canterbury first, and the other places as mentioned. From the many failures of the *screw* for long voyages, I must give the preference to *paddle wheels*. If they did nothing else but bring home *gold*, it must pay well; for gold buyers in the Colony would too gladly, I imagine, send their treasure by a conveyance that would only take fifty or sixty days at the longest, than by a sailing vessel round Cape Horn; which takes upon an average one hundred, or more.

Should these matters not be speedily turned out of hand by English Companies, and not *talked about only*, their enterprising friends across the water will save them the trouble; the *go-a-head* ideas of that nation will not long leave such a chance open. I see that *screw* vessels have been advertised for some parts of that route, and *when* I hear of their succeeding, I shall be too rejoiced to congratulate them, but *until* that time arrives and their success is pronounced to the world, I cannot help having my doubts; but, whichever plan succeeds, I shall be most delighted, when I return to the Colony, at being able to take the advantage of such a voyage.

The demoralizing effects that the discovery of gold has had, as far as regards children, is certainly very great; and if there are things wanted more than others, they are Schools at the diggings; at

Digitized by Google

Castlemaine, Castleton, Ballarat and the Ovens, where the population is the greatest, many people have stated how willingly they would support such institutions by sending their children there, if managed by good masters and mistresses. That excellent man Dr. Perry, Bishop of Melbourne, visited Forest Creek (Castlemaine) a few months since, and asserted the same; a meeting was held, and people *talked*—but whether they supported the principles which his Lordship I believe proposed, beyond *talking* about it, I am not aware; certainly, nothing was done beyond *talking* when I left.

Such dreadful and horribly disgusting language may be heard expressed by children on the diggings, that I do not imagine could be surpassed by the most hardened adults on Norfolk Island, this does not rest with boys alone, but little girls from *eight* to *ten* years of age, who have not unfrequently been required to give evidence before the authorities,—such evidence being sufficient at times to make one's blood run cold—thinking how, in the name of conscience, could a child of such an age be aware of the sins that existed, and the bold manner in which they would unhesitatingly give it; shocked indeed, may some of my fair readers be to think that such depravity exists amongst children of their own sex.

Whether to build schools for a permanency at these places, or have large canvas buildings erected, so that they could be moved according to the den-

Digitized by Google

sity of the population, requires to be considered—but doubtless, something or other must be done ere long, unless the wealthy colonists wish the rising generation to be one mass of heathens.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER X.

THE NATIVES—NATIVES OF TASMANIA EXTINCT—NEW ZEALAND "SIMILES"—THE EARL OF DERBY—THE PROTECTORATE PLAN—AN AMUSING NATIVE—MESSRS. LANGHORNE AND BONNEY—MR. MOORHOUSE'S REPORT—RESULTS—ARRIVAL OF THE 40TH REGT.—THE BRITISH SOLDIER—THE BRITISH SAILOR—CAPT. J. B. GODFREY—EXTRACT FROM ARGUS—THE STRANGER'S LETTER—HIS AFFLICTING SITUATION—HOUSELESS IMMIGRANTS' HOME—FINDING A SAMARITAN—PEOPLE WHO SHOULD READ THE LETTER—REAL FRIENDS.

ENGLAND may justly be proud, hearing from every part of the world of the advancement of her sons, and with them of her manners, customs, religion, and language; yearly are these sons, through God's assistance making discoveries, and revealing secrets to the world of the treasures that have laid hidden for ages; boasting, as she well may, that her name is accompanied by the blessings of Christianity, religion, and civilization, thereby converting the wilderness and forest into a smiling orchard.

These events have, however, their drawbacks—wherever the white man puts his foot, so surely in time do the aborigines and lords of the soil vanish

Digitized by Google

from the face of the earth; consequently, bringing about certain results, the very contrary to what England professes to do—and certainly, opposed to the humane principles that are stamped on the heart of every *true Briton.*

Colonization, from the days of Mexico's conquest by Hernand Cortes, and later by the Anglo-Saxon race in North America, have been too good instances where the black population has dwindled away by the intrusion of the white, but these are circumstances that do not belong to the present day.

At the Antipodes, no matter whether on the continent of Australia, the islands of Van Diemen's Land, New Zealand and the Polynesian group generally, the aboriginal race are day by day decreasing, through the sons of Britain having settled themselves amongst them.

Nature had planted the various tribes of human beings on these places, and provided them with different ways of obtaining subsistence, partly from the cultivation of the soil, and partly by the beasts of the forest, fowls of the air, and fish of the rivers and seas; they were also provided with woods to make spears, flax to make lines and nets, shells to make hooks, &c. to trap such creatures as they required for their own use, in most instances, however, only very scantily, at the same time sufficient to supply the wants of nature.

Not much more than half a century ago, the

Digitized by Google

native was master over the vast plains in the Australian continent, where nature had placed him; now, however, the white man has stepped in, and taken possession of his land, *nolens volens*, and for hundreds of miles the aboriginal is scarcely to be met with, or at all events, in anything like the numbers originally, when the first colonists landed in the harbour of Port Jackson; if he watch his opportunity, and commits any crime by stealing to satisfy his appetite, he is made to understand that "his day *was*," and that the white man's "now *is*," and he is punished by the white man's laws.

During the governorship of Sir George Arthur in Van Diemen's Land, the natives were all hunted down, and subsequently sent to Flinders Island, where they have nearly all died off, thus totally exterminating one race of human beings from off the face of the earth; this circumstance, I believe, was absolutely necessary, if England intended to keep the place as a colony, for they committed great havoc, still we cannot but feel with pain, that such a course had to be adopted, and that by our stepping into that island, the signal was given for a sexton to toll the funeral knell over those inhabitants whom the Almighty had placed there as the lawful heirs to the soil.

The chances are, that ere another half century passes, the aborigines of Australia will have followed those of Tasmania, or dwindled down to so few, that

Digitized by Google

they will be looked on as a curiosity, and some *enterprising* man may exhibit them in the Egyptian Hall as a description of *rara avis*.

Those who have travelled over New Zealand, cannot help remarking, from the great numbers of entrenchments that still remain of large pahs,* what a great diminution there must be in the intelligent natives of that country, and well aware are they (for I have heard them express the same, or at all events it was so translated to me) that their race is gradually decreasing, and that the white man must take his place entirely, before many years are gone by, saying, they are like the Totara in the bush, when once the wedge is in, the whole tree is soon "split up," and so with the white man, by purchasing a small tract of ground, he must soon have "the whole."

The vast influence of England extends with her sons wherever they go; her name is a terror to her enemies; from the extension of the Gospel preached by her missionaries, together with her education, genius has been brought out from savage life almost without parallel; the cannibal and heathen are converted to be the most exemplary Christians, making her character respected in all parts of the world.

The British Government has neither been blind nor deaf, to the claims or reasonings of humanity, on behalf of the Australian aborigines. Much has been endeavoured, and considerable sums expended, to improve their social condition, but to very little pur-

* Towns or villages.

Digitized by Google

pose. Our ablest statesmen have had their attention occupied repeatedly about the fate of these poor creatures.

The following noble sentiments of the present Earl of Derby (when Lord Stanley) upon this subject in one of his dispatches, to Sir George Gipps, in December, 1842, well deserve a place in any book of this sort.

His Lordship says:—

"I cannot conclude this despatch without expressing my sense of the importance of the subject, and my hope that your experience may enable you to suggest some general plan, by which we may acquit ourselves of the obligations which we owe towards this helpless race of beings. I should not, without extreme reluctance admit that nothing can be done—that with respect to them alone, the doctrines of Christianity must be inoperative, and the advantages of civilization incommunicable. I cannot acquiesce in the theory that they are incapable of improvement, and that their extinction, before the advance of the white settler is a necessity which it is impossible to control. I recommend them to your protection, and favourable consideration, with the greatest earnestness, but at the same time with perfect confidence, and assure you that I shall be willing and anxious to co-operate with you in any arrangement for their civilization which may hold out a fair prospect of success."

A Protectorate plan was established at an

Digitized by Google

immense expense in New South Wales, which money it was said, at one time might almost have been as well expended attempting to drain the sea dry, its loss would not have been more regretted, than its unfortunate resultless application, when endeavouring to redeem the savage; not that it can be supposed these poor creatures are beyond redemption, as I will exemplify by the following instance; a boy from the Murray (who poor lad was afterwards murdered by some wild blacks about a mile from my camp), became perfectly civilized, and learnt to be a tailor, with a person at Melbourne; he often amused us around the camp fire at night relating funny stories, and amongst others, how he had made "*de Gubner trowder*," (the Governor's trowsers), he used generally to call himself, Mr. Wright's Charlie. The circumstances attending his murder it was supposed, was the jealousy of some blacks; a stockman found him when hunting cattle; the poor fellow called to him from amongst some scrub, and said, "make haste, go tell Commissioner to make doctor come and put my belly in, me soon get well; you say my name is Charlie." The poor wretch was lying down, with all his entrails out; it being one of the digusting practices of the natives to cut each other open in order to procure the kidney fat, not for eating, but to rub their hair on their bodies with, and this unfortunate creature had been served in that manner; the following day we found him dead. There was an instance at the Wimmera of a

Digitized by Google

man recovering after being so served and getting *fat* afterwards.

Mr. Eyre, when writing some years* ago, said, "I cannot persuade myself that any real or permanent good will ever be effected, until the influence exercised over the young by the adults be destroyed, and they be freed from the contagious effects of their example."

I heard a native in the town of Sofala, in New South Wales, amusing a lot of diggers by chaffing a sergeant of the mounted police (whom he apparently knew well) asking him what business had he or any other white fellow to come and take *his* land, and rob him of *his* gold? what would he (the sergeant) say, if black fellow went to England and "turn em Queen out?" which sally produced plenty of laughter. Their remarks at times are rather funny, for instance, when the gaol was being built at Newcastle, one of them, after looking very attentively for some time at the men working, said, "Him big fool, white fellow, make 'em gaol to put himself in."

It is almost an impossibility to make any correct estimate of the native population, their unsettled habits not allowing a right census to be obtained. Mr. Moorhouse, a Protector at Adelaide, estimated the number in that part from 3000 to 4000, while Mr. Eyre thought it double.

* Journals of Expeditions of Discovery in Central Australia and overland from Adelaide to King George's Sound, 2 vols. 8vo. T. and W. Boone.

Digitized by Google

Parents being accustomed to have their children to assist in hunting, fishing, &c. cannot understand or hear of their absenting themselves for more than a day or two; some of them have been taught the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments, but has any one been able to prove that they understood one single word about it? soon afterwards you might see the same parties eating offal that a dog would not touch.

An acquaintance of mine at the Turon had two natives who had been with him for several years, but I believe this is not *very* frequently the case, being rather too fond of a lazy life, basking in the sun, and letting their "gin" ply the "yamstick," and dig from the soil their miserable subsistence as before, although they are to be found occasionally as shepherds, or looking after horses, being capital hands at either tracking man or beast; also as police — many a bushranger in former days was traced to his hiding-place by these people.

Desperate fights with natives used to take place formerly during the first overland expeditions from Sydney to Melbourne and Adelaide, by Messrs. Langhorne, Bonney, &c.

In Mr. Moorhouse's Report of a Native School in South Australia, he says:—

"The school has been better attended than during the previous quarter, the daily average having been 39 boys and 19 girls; a total of 58.

"As His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor

Digitized by Google

may direct this Report to be published, I may be permitted to repeat what has been before reported, namely, an outline of the mode of instruction adopted in the school, and in future Reports, return to the usual tabular form.

"First class, containing thirteen boys and seven girls, and consisting of those least advanced in Pestalozzi's method of imparting instruction by object, or pictorial representation of objects, is found of great value in all the classes, but more especially in this. These children, when wild from the bush, have to be taught our language, and conversing about objects is found to be the quickest and easiest manner of communicating it. The Infant School method is also adopted.

"Second class, contains eleven boys and five girls; these are so far advanced as to be able to read easy lessons, to write words and sentences upon their slates, to write and add numbers, and are acquainted with the most prominent points in Scripture History.

"Third class, contains fifteen boys and five girls, all of whom can read and write. In this class the Scriptures are read and explained daily. In writing, the proficiency of children is quite equal to that of Europeans, having had similar advantages. In arithmetic, several have advanced beyond the four first rules, and can apply their knowledge to useful calculations with considerable accuracy. The objects kept in view in all the instructions are the

Digitized by Google

discipline of the mental powers, and imparting to their feelings a moral and religious tone. The children, from half-past nine until twelve, are occupied during the morning in the school, but the afternoons are devoted to manual labour, the boys in digging the garden and cutting firewood, the girls in needlework. Two boys are daily assisting in the government garden, two others about the demesne, and one as messenger in the printing-office.

"The girls have made twenty-six pair of trowsers, twenty-four cotton shirts, twenty-eight chemises, eighteen red shirts, thirty-six pocket handkerchiefs, and twenty-four shawls. One of these girls married George Murray, a European.

"Results. One is open to admit that these have not been so encouraging as we desired they would have been, there is however reason to hope that the instructions have not been altogether in vain. During the nine years' operation of the school, only one child that has been instructed in it has been arraigned in a court of justice, and the girl was known to be given to theft at the time of her admission; some of the boys who have left have entered the service lately of settlers, and shown a great deal more intelligence and constant attention than those taken rude and wild from the bush."

This statement was addressed to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, and puts a better light on the things than at first, but for all, I do not think adults will be able to shake off their old habits; at all events,

Digitized by Google

ever in any way to be compared to my old friends, the Mâories, in New Zealand.

So much having been written by far more able pens than mine, upon the subject of the aborigines of Australia, viz. Sir George Grey,* Mr. Eyre, Sir Thos. Mitchell, &c. I must beg to refer my readers to any of their works, should they wish for further particulars. My occupation, whilst in Australia, engrossed my whole time, and I never came much in contact with the natives, or even heard them much spoken about.

In November, 1852, H.M. steamer Vulcan, landed her Majesty's 40th regiment, who were stigmatized in the most uncalled-for manner by the organ of the people; however, I do not think it thereby gained much *éclat*; *on dit*, that, delighted as the ladies of Melbourne were, to hear the band play twice a week, how much more so would they have been at the balls, if they were honoured with a view of golden epaulettes, or if their waists were encircled, when dancing the polka, by arms in coat sleeves, in lieu of sleeves of the shell jacket.

In January detachments were sent up to the diggings in lieu of the pensioners, under the command of Captain White; the escort of gold had also been given over to officers and men from the regiment, who wear cabbage-tree hats instead of forage

* Journals of Expeditions of Discovery in North-West and Western Australia, including Australind. 2 vols. 8vo. T. & W. Boone.

Digitized by Google

caps, which is a much more sensible plan. A number of volunteers have also been sent to the police riding school, for the purpose of doing the work as mounted police, or I ought to term them dragoons, for patrolling the roads to the diggings, making now three distinct parties patrolling, namely, police cadets, who consist of 100 young gentlemen whom the Lieut.-Governor has appointed, being sanctioned by the Council, in *expectation* of getting commissions in the force as vacancies occur; this corps promises to be an efficient one, at all events they have the making it so, if properly handled; there are then the regular mounted police, and the soldiers; if these various corps are put in different districts, I should be inclined to back the heroes of Maharajpore keeping their routes clearer of ruffians than either of the others, by two to one; *irregulars* are all very well, but *regulars* are a great deal better.

The few desertions that took place at first rather surprised people, those that did occur were mostly caused by the men getting amongst people, who led them away when excited by drink, &c. or else they were bad characters; considering the temptations that were open, it reflects great credit on the regiment that desertions were not more numerous; the predictions of *some* on the subject were, I am happy to say, entirely at variance with those who knew the *real* character of the BRITISH SOLDIER, for whatever faults he may have, there is that feeling of a thorough-born Briton within him, that so long as he is treated

Digitized by Google

as a MAN, he would sooner suffer death in its worst form, than be accused of forsaking his colours at a time when his services were *most* required, and I really and sincerely believe that the whole of the gold ever taken from Mount Alexander would not tempt them to desert the cause which they considered themselves bound as MEN to uphold.

Barracks have been built of galvanized iron, but the place selected for their erection does not appear very eligible, according to all accounts the most likely to be sickly of any place in Melbourne, and from being so near the swamp, they may know by this time what it is to feel ague.

In asserting what I have about "British soldiers," I must not forget "British sailors;" desertions have doubtless taken place on the stations of California and Australia, but what is the number? Do sailors even equal, comparatively speaking, the soldiers, or do they *exceed* the number of desertions that usually take place on board most of Her Majesty's ships? whether it is so, or whether it is not, I cannot say positively, only I must express my own ideas on the subject, and from all I could *see* and *hear*, should say "decidedly not;" proper management and the decisive measures taken at the commencement of the *fever*, in a great measure prevented it, together with that inward characteristic feeling existing amongst the men themselves. Neither was this feeling apparent *only* on board men-of-war; the ship "Statesman"

Digitized by Google

that I came home in, retained more than a dozen of the crew she left England with; the fact was, they had a respect for the commander; and the *brutal* conduct that I had previously seen perpetrated on board English merchant ships, made me not at all surprised, at hearing of whole crews preferring to take six months in gaol to doing another hand's turn of work with such men (query brutes?); but most agreeably surprised was I to find that a different state of things was observable on board Capt. J. Bulwer Godfrey's vessel; being a complete *master* of his work and a perfect gentleman, he maintained on board that ship, as good discipline as ever there need be, and she came into London Docks as clean almost as if turned out of a "*bandbox*," instead of having come from a voyage round the Horn, thus reflecting much credit on commander, his officers, and crew.

From the accounts that are daily arriving in England of the dreadful misery that is experienced by the new arrivals in Melbóurne, and perceiving an article in the "Argus," relative to an affecting letter that was sent from a lady in Canvas Town to the editor, I copy it here, to show people the state of things since I left.

"The affecting letter from a lady in Canvas Town, which lately appeared in our columns has led to several communications suggestive of measures for the relief of that and similar cases. The subject is a difficult one. Families exposed to the incon-

Digitized by Google

veniences arising from the present condition of the colony, are often not such as would listen to any proposal of charitable assistance; and therefore propositions of subscriptions, bazaars, &c. for the supply of funds for their relief, seem scarcely calculated to meet the peculiar exigencies of the case. We do not know what to recommend. It is sad to see great misery side by side with extravagant prosperity, and it is still more sad to feel unable to suggest an effective remedy.

"An individual case here and there might indeed be seen to, but alas! the single cases that come before the public are but samples of a class. At present we can only plead for consideration for the new arrivals *en masse*, and assuring our readers that many of them are in really distressed and unhappy circumstances, urge upon all the older and more prosperous colonists, the solemn duty of considering the claims of the stranger and the friendless, and bespeak from them one and all, a warm and generous sympathy for any such as may come under their immediate personal observation."

I think it but right to include in this book one letter that I have seen since I left, which was sent to the Editor of the "Melbourne Argus."

THE STRANGER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS.

Canvas Town, Tent 40, Jan. 29, 1853.

SIR,—In reading your remarks on a letter received by you from a lady residing at Canvas Town, I would, in behalf of

Digitized by Google

hundreds as well as myself and family, thank you most heartily for the deep interest you have always manifested in our behalf. You are right when you say that it is not a solitary case of the forlorn, wretched, outcast condition of merely one or two individuals. It is that of nearly all, I am sorry to say, and especially of those who have the seemingly great misfortune to have large families, who are, I believe, without exception, situated like the person whom your kind remarks refer to. If it would not be a trespass unpardonable to tax your precious time I wish to give you a lengthened statement of the sufferings and privations of a family. We sailed from London in the month of June, 1852, on board the Lady Eveline. God in mercy preserved myself, wife, and family (eight in number) the whole voyage, so that we had not one day's serious illness. On board, there was illness of every description, especially small pox. When we entered the Bay the ship was put into quarantine for thirty days. After ten days' confinement on board the lady Eveline, we, who were well, were drafted off to the ship Fanny, and after spending three weeks aboard the Fanny, we were let out of quarantine, and here our misfortunes, as well as our ill-prepared circumstances to meet emergencies, commenced. We were obliged to pay our own expenses for landing, which, with luggage, cost £4. On arriving at the wharf, at half-past seven in the evening, the captain said it was too late; we could not remove our luggage that night, but on Monday morning, as early as we liked, as it would be all right. With this understanding we left the wharf, to seek a lodging, but alas, were doomed to disappointment, and had it not been for a man who had a tent erected on the green, we must have walked the streets all night. On Monday morning my wife and two eldest boys were down to the wharf by six o'clock, and to their great surprise the luggage was taken off the steamer on Saturday night; upon enquiry, the gate-keeper said some fresh hands came in late, and they were glad to employ them; they left the boxes and other goods in such a mixed state, that it took two

Digitized by Google

hours before we could collect them together; on examining, three of them were broken open and one gone; altogether it took three hours to search among the other passengers' luggage. It was not to be found anywhere. I made inquiry of the various persons employed, and I was assured it would be forthcoming; they said there were several large boxes on board the steamer, which could not be got out in time for her to start, feeling confident when the steamer returned, we should get the missing box. In two hours time the steamer came again, bringing passengers and luggage. I went on board, examined the hold and every part of the vessel, but could not find it. I went to the head clerk or wharfinger and inquired what I had better do; he replied, I am not, neither shall I be accountable for your boxes; I have not charged you for it, have I? So that I lost the only box that contained all the family's best clothing and upwards of £30.

Now, Sir, if that were all I should not have mentioned my loss. Having spent one week under a tent, and with but little means, coupled with the dearness of provisions, myself and two eldest boys, one aged 15, the other 12, went to town to seek employment. But this, I am sorry to say, we could not obtain, as all the situations were filled up during our stay in quarantine. Seeing nothing but poverty and destruction before our eyes, drove me to make application to a registry office, and there I paid 1*s*, with the promise, if I called on the morrow, there would no doubt be something for me. I did so, and was given to understand if I paid 5*s*, there was an excellent situation for me. I paid the said sum, and was sent to a spirit merchant, and after a few questions asked and answered, I was to meet the agent in two hours. I did so, and engaged at £60 per annum to go up the country 200 miles as shepherd, or, if suiting the parties, I was to be a confidential servant. The agent said we were to start on the following day, and as my family were large, he would not take anything except bedding and wearing apparel. I returned home, consulted with my wife, and she, seeing no alternative but either to go or die of

Digitized by Google

hunger, gave her consent, and we immediately called in a broker, selling, at an awful sacrifice, all our domestic articles. Dear Mr. Editor, just to convince the Government and the public generally, that when it is said we will not or cannot work, we are unjustly represented. In order to meet the agent's wishes to secure a situation, I sold, for the small sum of £5, one feather bed, one down bed, three flock mattrasses, a clock with brass works and chains, a large box of kitchen utensils, that two men could scarcely lift, a box of books, 3 feet by 2, 2 cane chairs, 7 empty boxes, besides 40 other sundry articles. With but little left, we went to the place appointed, and to our great surprise and misfortune, the agent said two horses had been stolen, and therefore we must wait a day or two until he could buy a couple; we accordingly waited in great suspense, and under very peculiarly trying circumstances, eight of us sleeping under a dray, with a horse tied to each wheel all night. But that was not the worst: the agent was an unfeeling, drunken fellow, and used to stop away until twelve o'clock, sometimes three or four in the morning; he made it a rule to fire off his pistols close to the dray, which made the horses kick and prance at a frightful rate, and caused a general alarm to my poor wife and young children; the fifth night he did so, one of the horses plunged so dreadfully that it pulled the wheel of the dray over a pillow that my little boy, aged eight years, was sleeping on; when we got up in the morning it was found severed in two. I felt so alarmed, and seeing my wife in tears, I felt indignant at such treatment; I spoke to him about the manner in which he acted, and the cruel treatment we had received; he very unfeelingly said, that is nothing to what you will suffer on the road. I sent for a cart, removed my few remaining articles, and tearing up the agreement, left this scene of misery. In this truly awful plight I thought I must above all things lose my senses; having purchased the *Argus* newspaper that morning, I happened to glance my eye over the Government Houseless Immigrants' Home. Well, said I, thank God, here is shelter for

Digitized by Google

us in this cruel land. I applied to the Government agent, and explained in a few words our circumstances, thinking that gentleman would have compassion on a poor helpless family. "No, Sir," was the answer, "you must pay £2. 5s for ten days' lodging in a room without cupboard, shelf, bedstead, or fire-place;" necessity compelled me to knuckle to this exorbitant demand for so comfortless a place. Oh, sir, let me tell you, after my family had retired to rest, I went on my knees, but my mind was so confused, and my thoughts wandering, that I could not utter one word; all I could do was to sigh; when a little collected, I began to think thus—how different is the stranger received in old England; he can have every comfort, and meet with kind friends and a warm reception as soon as he puts a foot on shore; is he a member of the Established Church, there he finds an association of friends; is he a Dissenter, he meets with an association of friends; is he a Romanist, he will find the same. Is he an infidel, he is also welcomed by an association of friends. But, alas, how widely different here. No one seems to care for the poor immigrant, good or bad, body or soul. After ten days, we were ordered to quit; but, Sir, let me tell you, God, in the good order of his over-ruling Providence, raised me up a kind friend, and becoming acquainted with my last calling, gave me three months' work, and before entering upon it, put a £10 note into my hand, which, God be praised, enabled me to purchase a tent; since then I have in some measure been able to forget past afflicting circumstances. Mr. Editor, as you will perceive by the enclosed card my profession in London, it would not be prudent in me to enter upon particulars respecting my knowledge of the required means in relieving and elevating the distressed condition of families residing under tents. I will just state, for the last ten weeks I have been visiting and distributing religious tracts, reading the scriptures, and in endeavouring by God's help to administer a word of comfort to the sick and dying, and in giving all required information to newly arrived immigrants respecting where to buy and how to erect tents,

Digitized by Google

and otherwise to make myself generally useful. I would also state this same gentleman, feeling a deep interest in the rising generation, has got a large tent erected for a school-room and employed a proficient master from London. I am thankful to say there are from 50 to 60 children taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and other useful branches of education. Dear Sir, in concluding, I would just say, that, if a Committee of warm-hearted philanthropists could be formed, and go at the work in right earnest, there would not be six families left in Canvas Town longer than three months. Their continued appeal is—what will become of us in winter.

PUBLICOLA,
Day School,
Tent 40, Canvas Town.

These accounts may perhaps give the public at home a better idea of what is to be expected; it will be seen also that their own press cannot conceal the absolute misery that some people go through who emigrate, particularly those with large families, and are unprovided with sufficient means to enable them to maintain a livelihood for their families, or themselves, until something should turn up. I have no doubt the first lady in question is one of those respectable people, who are daily going out to the colonies without perhaps a ten-pound note in their pockets; when they land, they feel ashamed to go and ask for work, and I believe would sooner die than beg. It is to that class of people, more *than any* other, I do most strongly urge to take warning previous to emigrating, unless, as I have said before, they have *real* friends who will offer them shelter, and endeavour to befriend them

Digitized by Google

when they arrive, otherwise they will be worse off than even with the workhouse staring them in the face at home.

At the conclusion of this volume, my intention is offering such advice to intending emigrants, who may be desirable people.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

EARLY KNOWLEDGE OF AUSTRALIA—CAPTAIN COOK—POSSESSION ISLAND—FIRST EXPEDITION—M. DE LA PEROUSE—SYDNEY COVE—BOUNTY BLIGH—JOHN M'ARTHUR, ESQ.—REVOLT—GOVERNOR MACQUARIE—SIR THOMAS BRISBANE—AUSTRALIAN AGRICULTURAL COMPANY—SIR RALPH DARLING—CAPTAIN STURT—SIR RALPH'S ALLEGED CRUELTY—SIR RICHARD BOURKE—"ADVANCE VICTORIA"—CURIOUS CIRCUMSTANCE—A CUNNING BLACKSMITH—C. J. LA TROBE, ESQ.—GEELONG—LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF VICTORIA—THE GOLD—ESTIMATED PRODUCE—CANADIAN GULLY—SOCIAL CONDITION—ADVICE OF NEWSPAPERS TO EMIGRANTS—MORAL CONDITION—REPORT OF W. WESTGARTH, ESQ.—ENORMOUS PRODUCE OF 1852—IMPORTS, EXPORTS, AND POPULATION—SUMMARY—REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—NEW TARIFF—PORT DUES—IMPORTS AND EXPORTS—DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLES—INCREASE OF WOOL—GENERAL SUMMARY—WITH REGARD TO CALIFORNIA—POPULATION—ACCORDING TO KHULL—COMMERCE WITH THE UNITED STATES—THE RIVER MURRAY—THE FIRST STEAMER LAUNCHED—SIR H. YOUNG—COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY—REPORT—PORT ELLIOTT—TRAFFIC ON MURRAY—ANNUAL INCREASE OF STOCK—COST OF TRAFFIC PER CWT.—FLAX AND GYPSUM—CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS—EMIGRANTS WHAT THEY SHOULD CONSIDER—PARENTS AND GUARDIANS—GOOD CHANCE FOR SMALL CAPITALISTS—FEMALE EMIGRANTS—THE END.

It may not prove uninteresting to give a short outline of the discovery and progress of the Antipodean Land, concerning which nearly every one has his eyes and ears open, to catch any information that may arrive.

The Chinese, it is said, were acquainted with the northern part of the island from a very early period,

Digitized by Google

which is not at all unlikely, from the settlement they have not 300 miles distant, and their favorite food, the sea slug, being found in abundance near it.

The earliest records of any authority are Spanish ones.

About the year 1550, in the course of their voyages from South America, they are said to have discovered some part of the island or islands of the Australian group. In 1605, a voyage of discovery was made by F. de Quiros, and Luis Torres, the latter, who was second in command, passed through the straits named after him, which are a terror to navigators, from the coral reefs and shoals with which it abounds,* but this knowledge remained almost in a state of obscurity until the great navigator, "Captain James Cook," re-discovered it in 1770.

The Dutch, about the year 1605, also made voyages of discovery, which continued one after the other until 1626, and named the island New Holland.

In 1642, an expedition, under the celebrated Tasman, discovered the island of Van Diemen's Land, also called Tasmania, which was reported to be the abode of "howling evil spirits."

D'Entrecasteaux, Marrion, Tobias, Dampier, &c. were amongst other discoverers of various parts round this coast; but it was not until Cook, after

* This inner passage, by way of Torres Strait, has lately been most accurately surveyed by Captain F. P. Blackwood, R.N. as detailed in the "Narrative of the Voyage of H. M.'s Surveying Ship Fly," by J. B. Jukes, Esq. Naturalist to the Expedition. 2 vols. 8vo.

Digitized by Google

observing the transit of Venus at Tahiti, for which purpose he especially left England, that anything very particular was known of the country; sailing up the coast, the masthead man, named Jackson, reported the harbour, which has been called "Port Jackson" ever since. Cook, imagining it was only a boat harbour, sailed on to the northward, and anchored in a place which he named Moreton Bay. He made the coast of New Holland about the middle of April, 1770, and on the 27th, anchored in what he christened Botany Bay; and so named it from the evergreens, grass-trees, and the number of plants that were collected, &c. which, together with the birds, and kangaroos that were jumping about, and various other things coming under his observation, made the whole country very interesting, differing entirely from anything he had ever before seen; at this time he was accompanied by Mr. (afterwards Sir Joseph) Banks and Dr. Solander.

After leaving Botany Bay he kept along the coast until arriving at Moreton Bay, from thence he proceeded northwards to Cape York, and passed through Torres Strait, proving, as Torres had before reported, that there was a navigable channel between New Holland and New Guinea. He landed at various places along the coast; upon one occasion getting his vessel on shore at Endeavour River, whilst refitting, one of his men ran down almost mad, declaring he had seen the "devil," and was sure he could have caught him, had he not been afraid. It proved to be a Vampyre.

Digitized by Google

Cook landed for the last time on an island which he named "Possession Island," and took possession of the whole eastern coast of New Holland, in the name of his sovereign King George III., King of Great Britain, firing a Royal salute, and the men giving three cheers from the main rigging, the whole territory was named New South Wales, on account of its resemblance to some part of the Welsh coast: he then re-embarked.

Cook left his successors, Flinders and Bass, to discover the straits named after the latter, in which the harbour of Port Philip, or rather Victoria is situated; it has been the surprise of many, that with his usual sagacity, he never should have examined the harbour of Port Jackson, where now stands the far famed city of Sydney; also, that he should not have looked a little deeper into Moreton Bay, and discovered the Brisbane River, which was only found out in 1823, and opened up such a splendid grazing country; together with coming to the conclusion, that Van Diemen's Land was part of New Holland.

What an extraordinary difference is noticeable in the treatment of criminals at the present day from what it was seventy years ago; their education, health, and religious instruction is attended to now much more so, perhaps, than the peasant population of the country generally, at all events as regards those, in the densely inhabited portion of the manufacturing districts.

On looking back to the year 1787, we find the first

Digitized by Google

fleet sailed for Botany Bay, consisting of H. M. ship Sirius, and another armed vessel, besides store ships and transports, under the command of Captain Hunter, which vessels conveyed the first Governor, Arthur Philip, Esq., Captain, R. N., with a Major Commandant and about 200 Subalterns, Non-commissioned Officers and Privates of the Royal Marines, "*per mare et per terram.*" Well does this gallant corps deserve those words on their appointments, if only for their conduct, during the dreadful privations they underwent during the early period of colonization in Australia.

The prisoners consisted of six hundred men, two hundred and fifty women, who were the lowest description of the abandoned of their sex, and many of them insane or idiots, infirm and aged; this disproportion of the sexes was increased to nearly seven to one; and the dreadful scenes that occurred are too revolting to be recorded in any book. To mention any other of the horrible barbarities that were perpetrated during those days, would only be repeating a too-often told tale.

Governor Philip soon found out that Botany Bay never would do for a penal settlement; for, in the first place, the anchorage was not safe; in the second, fresh water was wanting, and from the general appearance of the land, he did not even consider there was sufficient to answer the purposes required for agriculture.

On the 23rd of January, 1788, he sailed in com-

Digitized by Google

pany with three boats to search to the northward, and was most agreeably surprised at finding Port Jackson (which Cook imagined was only a boat harbour,) to be one of the finest harbours in the world; perhaps the only one that can be said to exceed it, is Rio de Janeiro, or Queen Charlotte Sound in New Zealand; but the latter is more an arm of the sea than a harbour.

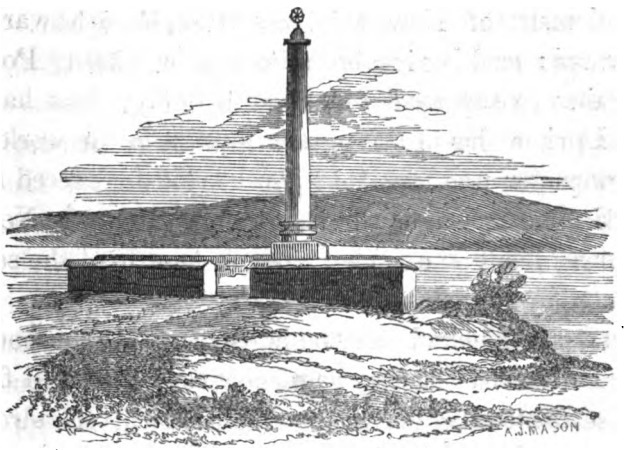
After Philip had satisfied himself as to the harbour of Port Jackson being the place where he should fix the settlement, he got under weigh with his squadron of boats, and when sailing down the harbour, to their surprise they observed two French Men of War, the Boussole and Astrolabe, sailing up; this proved to be the expedition of the unfortunate M. de la Perouse; it was probable only a few days priority secured Port Jackson to England, otherwise France would have, perhaps, claimed the sovereignty.

This squadron sailed soon afterwards and were never heard of any more until discoveries were made, in 1826, at the Manicola Islands, which, from the instruments, &c. that were found amongst the savages, proved their mournful fate, as having been wrecked and murdered.

A monument is erected in Botany Bay in memory of La Perouse and his unfortunate crew.

The English Fleet were shifted from Botany Bay to Sydney Cove, in Port Jackson, so named after Lord Sydney, at that time First Lord of the Admiralty.

Digitized by Google



Monument to La Perouse.

The whole party who landed consisted of about a thousand souls, and these were the pioneers, through whom commenced the career of New South Wales and the Australian Colonies.

The greatest ruffian, provided he was a good mechanic, was placed over a gang of others, who perhaps, were Irish transported for political offences and compelled to perform the drudgery of beasts of burden, only with far worse treatment.

The aborigines at this time swarmed all about this part of the country, but these tribes have since died off.

In the Courts of Justice that were established the President officiated in the capacity of three parties; viz. Prosecutor, Judge, and Jury.

Governor Philip was superseded, *pro tem.*, by Lieutenant-Governor Grose, until the arrival of Governor Hunter, in 1795; during his time the

Digitized by Google

settlement of Newcastle, on Hunter's River, was formed; coal having been discovered. In 1800, he again was superseded by Captain King.

During his government the first Australian newspaper was founded by a convict named Howe, and published by authority. A revolt also occurred during his time amongst the convicts, who were defeated by Major Johnstone of the N. S. Wales corps; sixty-seven were killed, ten were tried, and five hung.

In 1806, Bligh (too well known as the commander of the Bounty) arrived and superseded King; an insurrection took place during his time; he was placed in arrest by Major Johnstone and sent to England; the Major, subsequently, was also tried at Chelsea Hospital, found guilty, and cashiered. It is stated that his conduct, though illegal and revolutionary, nevertheless saved the Colony. The coarse language, violence of temper, his detestation of military, and the contempt in which he held civilians, made Bligh universally hated.

John McArthur, whose name will for ever be coupled with any future history of Australia, was the first man who ever thought of importing merino sheep, considering the climate and country well adapted for wool growing purposes, and, after returning to England, and being examined by the Government of George III. was granted 10,000 acres of land, and obtained permission to purchase a few pure Spanish merinos from his Majesty's flocks.

Digitized by Google

It happened that, after a year or so of the first settlers landing, several of their cows, with a bull, got away, proving themselves, perhaps, the best emigrants; the herd was discovered some years afterwards, having greatly increased in numbers and in remarkably good condition. McArthur selected his land in this neighbourhood, by the side of the Cow-pasture River; adopting the idea that instinct had led the lost cattle to where the best feed was. This place has since become celebrated as "Camden," where, not only were the first Merinos bred, but also the first vineyards planted. McArthur proved himself what he was always considered, a far-seeing, intelligent, energetic, and persevering man, possessing the courage of a Cæsar and the patience of Job.

On the arrival of Bligh, McArthur was introduced by King, who immediately invited the new Governor to inspect his flocks at Camden, who however refused, adding most filthy epithets, and using language becoming only to a bullock driver.

After repeatedly displaying his temper, he commenced his arbitrary measures against McArthur, trying to hatch up a grievance out of jealousy and spite. McArthur refused to notice an illegal summons, and was arrested by Atkins, the Advocate-General; this man was the laughing stock of the community, and had to employ a convict attorney, who had been transported for forgery, to supply him with *legal* knowledge, of which he was entirely ignorant.

Digitized by Google

McArthur protested against being thus, as he considered, illegally tried, but this protest was refused. When he was tried, all the six officers, in addition to the Advocate-General, sided with the prisoner. So determined did he (Bligh) appear anxious to crush McArthur, that he proposed arresting and imprisoning the six officers on a charge of high treason.

This proceeding exhausted the patience of the colony, and caused the revolt, and an attack on the Governor in his own house.

The daughter of Bligh most heroically endeavoured to resist the entrance of the insurgents; not being able to accomplish that, she endeavoured hiding him under a bed, however, he was dragged thence into the presence of Major Johnstone, who placed him under arrest, and assumed the command of the colony.

Bligh rose in his own profession to be an admiral, but I do not think was ever employed afterwards, his character was stigmatised by the trivial sentence passed upon Johnstone.

The progress of the colony would have been retarded for many years, had Bligh succeeded in ruining McArthur; by his persevering experience the wool continued increasing, and was the only export, I believe, until within the last ten years.

Lieutenant-Governor Foveaux superseded Johnstone (in the command *pro tem.*) and his place was taken by Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson, from Van Diemen's Land, but subsequently, Lachlan

Digitized by Google

Macquarie was appointed Governor, ordered to reinstate Bligh, and then assume the governorship after twenty-four hours; he continued in the Government for twelve years, the longest time that ever it has been held by one man.

Soon after his arrival he created an emancipated man a magistrate, and asked him, together with others of the same class, to dine, much to the disgust of many of the free inhabitants, the officers of the regiments, &c. It is said that this act had the effect of making many a prisoner persevere, keep himself sober and industrious, in the hopes of some day driving in his carriage and dining with His Excellency. During his career, convicts were employed making the roads when not required by the settlers. Races, balls, &c. were also commenced during his time, Mrs. Macquarie presenting the lady's cup to the winner of that event.

Great numbers of buildings of importance were also erected during his career. In 1813, one of those periodical droughts occurred, which is so great a drawback in Australia; however, it had its good effect by inducing some indefatigable gentlemen to persevere, and a passage was found over the Blue Mountains, by which route the gold diggers still proceed to the present day.

The name of Macquarie will ever be remembered in Australia, from the number of different things being called after him, in the shape of forts, rivers, light-houses, &c.

Digitized by Google

He was succeeded, in 1821, by Sir Thos. Brisbane, whose government was only of short duration (four years). During this limited time, however, several important events occurred. The first Chief Justice, Attorney-General, Solicitor-General, Colonial Treasurer, &c. arrived in the country.

Liberty of the press and trial by jury was commenced at the first Quarter Sessions, and a newspaper was established, independent of government aid.

The struggle between the people and the government commenced, which has continued until now, when His Grace of Newcastle has conceded to the Australians full powers of self-government and self-taxation.

The first observatory was erected during his time.

Sir Thos. Brisbane's government appears to have been only very unpopular, but most people give him credit of acting from perfectly pure motives; upon one occasion, having bought up all the wheat for Government at a low price, the settlers imagined that the harvest had been so good that they even fed the pigs with wheat. As time, however, wore on, a different aspect appeared; there was a deficiency, and, added to this calamity, a great flood swept away all the best of the crops. A famine followed, farmers were ruined, and had to sell their farms, the cash going into the hands of grog sellers and usurers.

The Brisbane river in Moreton Bay which,

Digitized by Google

people are surprised Cook did not find, was discovered in 1823, which has been the means of opening up such a splendid country for grazing and agriculture, including the growth of cotton, and perhaps sugar; also the Maneroo plains, near Twofold bay, in which neighbourhood gold has been discovered: in 1825 Messrs. Hovell and Hume made their overland trip to Port Philip, and in the same year the indefatigable Allan Cunningham opened up to the colonists the only road at the head of Hunter's River, to the pastoral districts of the Liverpool Plains: those who have seen it, state that it equals the wild, picturesque, and imposing views to be observed in the Alps.

Sir Thomas Brisbane was recalled at the latter end of 1825, and was succeeded by Sir Ralph Darling, whose Government also was most singularly unpopular.

The Australian Agricultural Company, which of late has been the subject of great attraction and speculation, commenced at this time; fortunate, indeed, were those who held several hundred shares that were given in payment of *bad debts*.

This Company, like most others which generally rise up about every ten years, with the most extravagant expectations of pecuniary profit, had a reaction; the Colony, however, derived a considerable benefit from the introduction of superior breeds of cattle, sheep and horses; together with ship loads of im-

Digitized by Google

plements and a staff of officers with comfortable salaries, who purchased ewes to such an extent as to raise the value of stock generally about 200 per cent. The splendid groves of orange trees — mulberry orchards for silkworm cultivation—the vineyards that were to send home as much wine as all England could drink; the olives that were to be exported to give a *goût* for the wine, together with olive oil; the hemp and flax that was to be produced to make rope for all the British Navy; and as for opium and the cultivation of the Poppy, Bombay itself was never to have come near it; the Niggers in Virginia might have imagined starvation staring them in the face, in consequence of the tobacco that was to be reared by the Company. Alas! how far did these promised cultivations extend? As far as I could understand, nearly to the gates of the salaried employés gardens.

Governor Darling exercised great severity over the convict population. Magistrates were allowed to flog people for idleness, insolence, or other offences; but it was not lawful for a man to flog his own assigned servants, so they used *kindly* to exchange compliments by flogging their friend's.

The first steam-boat was launched in 1831; and two others were soon put into use afterwards: the great Australian Presbyterian agitator also commenced about this time to publish his various shades of political opinions, and has settled with a determi-

Digitized by Google

nation of a "republic" form of government being the best; his hopes being that he may live to see the Union Jack trailed in the dust. "*Don't he wish he may get it.*"

Most successful explorations of the interior were made during Sir Ralph's Government, amongst the most fortunate was Captain Sturt, who descended the Murrumbidgee in a boat, and, subsequently, the Murray, as far as Lake Alexandrina, where he discovered the future Colony of South Australia; the hardships, privations, and dangers from rocks, snags, sandbanks and aborigines that he overcame, cannot have been surpassed by any of the explorers. Captain Sturt again performed a most arduous journey across the sandy desert, and succeeded in reaching the centre of the continent, and from the effects of which he has unfortunately lost his sight.* The Legislative Council of South Australia have voted him a pension of £500.

Leichhardt and Sir Thomas Mitchell are amongst others who have done wonders in the way of discovery, the latter laying out the roads, &c., to the interior: for further information relative to their surveys I must refer my readers to their works.†

* Captain Sturt himself published an account of this interesting journey, under the title of "Expedition of Discovery into Central Australia," in 2 vols. 8vo.

† "Three Expeditions into Eastern Australia," including the district of Australia Felix, by Major Sir T. L. Mitchell, 2 vols. 8vo.

"Journal of an Overland Expedition from Moreton Bay to Port Essington," by Dr. Ludwig Leichhardt, 1 vol. 8vo.

Digitized by Google

Sir Ralph's character is slandered to this day in the Colony, on account of his treatment of two soldiers, who committed a theft for the purpose of being transported; the punishment he ordered driving one mad, and causing the death of the other; he was not, however, without supporters in this case, but the Colony was divided into two parties in consequence, and most severe animadversions were passed; doubtless he had a most difficult task to perform, being Governor of a place where half the Colony were criminals of the worst description; had not an example been made, it might have led to a whole regiment doing the same thing, for it was very tantalizing to a soldier, seeing men who had been transported for the most heinous offences, in the enjoyment of comfortable estates out there; what he seems more to be censured for was, *after* the men were sentenced to transportation by the *civil* court, he rejudged the case (having heard that the men had committed this act to get transported,) and issued an order under which the soldiers were to be taken from the hands of the civil power, and to work in chains on the roads for the full term of their sentence and afterwards return to the ranks. The culprits were brought out in the middle of a hollow square formed by the regiment, stripped of their regimentals, which were replaced by the convict's dress; iron-spiked collars, with heavy chains, were put round their necks and legs, and they were drummed out to the tune of the rogue's march.

Digitized by Google

This was too much for Sudds (one of the men,) and he died in a few days; the other man, Thompson, became a lunatic.

In 1831 General Darling resigned his government, and was succeeded by Major-General Sir Richard Bourke, whose name is immortalized in the Colony of New South Wales, and to whom a monument is erected in one of the most conspicuous parts of the public drives at Sydney; he being considered, up to that time, the most able man that had yet been sent as Governor; equally zealous, energetic, and possessing the plain common sense of Macquarie, and, as regards far-sightedness, humanity, and liberality, infinitely superior.

Great numbers of events are recorded which occurred during the government of Sir Richard.

Steps were adopted, which finally, in 1840, led to the abolishment of transportation to New South Wales.

Squatting regulations were legalized and a systematic plan introduced which produced to the Government upwards of £60,000 per annum.

Port Philip and Van Diemen's Land were peopled from England, and South Australia was also colonized from the mother country.

Sir George Gipps succeeded Sir R. Bourke, in 1838, whose administration has always been considered one of the most important epochs in Australian history. He retired in 1846, completely worn out from the innumerable contests with the

Digitized by Google

colonists; from various accounts published by different authorities, he appears to have been continually at war with merchants, squatters, and the generality of colonists.

Sir Charles Fitzroy, the present Governor, succeeded Sir George, and is now titled, "Governor General of all the Australian Colonies."

ADVANCE VICTORIA.

In 1802 the enterprising Flinders sailed up the harbour of Port Philip, his companion, Dr. Bass, having, during his whale boat expedition, entered Western Port in 1798. Lieutenant Murray, I believe, of the Lady Nelson, first entered the harbour about three months previous to Flinders.

Colonel Collins of the Royal Marines was sent out in 1803, with two of his Majesty's ships, having a detachment of marines, also some free settlers, with several hundred prisoners, to form a penal settlement in Port Phillip; they landed at the south side of the bay on a sandy beach, which was unfavourable for landing and there was not sufficient fresh water.

One would imagine the Colonel was prejudiced against Port Philip, for, remaining there four months, it appears difficult to comprehend why the advantages of the place were not observable to some of the officers of the ships.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Chas. Grimes, the Surveyor-General of the Colony, had completed the survey of Flinders, and reported the existence of the Yarra-Yarra River, upon which the town of Melbourne now stands.

A rather curious circumstance took place in connection with the expedition; a prisoner who had been transported from the army for striking an officer, made his escape with two others. In 1834-5 when the early parties or explorers landed, near where William's Town now is, they observed a man amongst the natives evidently of a *paler* complexion, who stared and gibbered an unintelligible language, though evidently knowing something of English; he proved to be the escaped convict, who had lived for upwards of thirty years with the natives, and now again found himself amongst his own countrymen, but had quite forgotten his own language; he was a chief amongst them on account of his *height* and strength, being 6 feet 7 inches without his shoes. He had a free pardon granted him and subsequently became a constable in Van Diemen's Land.

Collins removed with all the expedition to Van Diemen's Land, having heard so much of the beauty and fertility of its shores.

In 1834, Messrs. Henty, now merchants in Melbourne, formed a whaling station at Portland Bay, and carried sheep and cattle over there from Launceston.

The squatters in Van Diemen's Land had begun

Digitized by Google

to find it impossible to feed any larger number of sheep, the runs being too limited in the island, and meetings were held to take into consideration what steps could be taken to procure the possession of an estate at Port Philip. Whilst this plan was in contemplation, a cunning blacksmith stole away from Launceston, and purchased about half a million of acres of the land from the natives, thinking it would hold good; and, as the story goes, when the association arrived, he rode down to warn them off his land. This, like several other schemes of the same sort, fell to the ground; however, he represented the whole to the Governor of Van Diemen's Land, who forwarded the same to the Colonial Office, and mentioned, that although he had warned him it would not hold good, nevertheless, thought him deserving of a grant of land.

From the discoveries of one person and another, people flocked to the country, in order to obtain as large a tract of land as they could for their sheep; the rush representing in those days nearly the same as that now for the Gold-fields.

Sir Richard Bourke visited it in 1837, and gave instructions about laying out the town of Melbourne, where it now stands.

The site of the present Gold-fields at Ballarat was, I understand, the principal place taken up for a sheep country.

Sir Thos. Mitchell made his further surveys right across the country, and his line of march went

Digitized by Google

directly through where the present Chief Commissioner's camp now stands at Castlemaine; the present Mount Alexander, he named Mount Byng.

C. J. La Trobe, Esq, (the present Lieutenant-Governor) was appointed Superintendent of the District in 1839, but all the Government Officers, I believe, were responsible to their own departments in Sydney, such as the Customs, Post Office, &c.

After long struggles, the Port Philippians gained their day in 1850, and it has since been entirely separated from the Colony of New South Wales, and is now termed Victoria; their badge was surmounted in 1851 with a *golden crown*, on account of the discoveries of the precious metal at Mount Alexander and Ballarat; thus, in less than twenty years has this colony risen to be one of the most important in the world, commencing with one or two explorers, and now having a population of upwards of 200,000.

I think this is an instance of how much more securely and successfully, energetic emigrants have proved themselves superior in forming a colony over speculating amateur companies; with the exception of a magistrate and a few police there was no other expense for the first few years; a company of soldiers, until very lately, was all that were ever in the colony.

Although a free colony, it was continually inundated with either runaway convicts, or those who had served their time, going over, either to plunder

Digitized by Google

the settlers, or to obtain the high rate of wages given.

The colony advanced every year from the period of its commencement, although in 1841-42, a wide-spread insolvency took place in consequence, more particularly, it was said, of the over speculation in land, &c.

Geelong, another town of importance, is built up the arm extending to the westward, in the bay of Port Philip. I have never visited it, but hear it is equally capable of improvement as Melbourne; large ships have to load at a place called Port Henry, some distance from the town.

The country used to boast of a good pack of hounds, the dingoes or native dog at times giving splendid runs; there is still a small pack in Melbourne, but I think people seem too much engaged in money making at present, to trouble their heads about hunting. Captain Fitzroy, at Sydney, has a very fair pack, and in Van Diemen's Land there are several. Kangaroos afford the sport in that island, there being no dingoes.

The bay also boasts of its Brighton and St. Kilda, where many of the wealthy merchants and *Squatto-cratic* gentry reside, who do not live at their stations.

On the south side of the Yarra-yarra, or (ever flowing river) some houses have been built by subscription for the houseless who arrive, without having so much as to pay for a week's lodging, but it is not a

Digitized by Google

twentieth part large enough. The Wesleyans also have erected a similar place on the Melbourne side of the river, which on Sundays is converted into a chapel.

C. J. La Trobe, Esq., was appointed the Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria as soon as it was separated from New South Wales, and since the discovery of the gold fields it is impossible to imagine the difficulties that any one (no matter who he might be) in the shape of the highest official would have to contend with; attacked as a matter of course by the opposition press, having at times the faults of others thrown upon his shoulders; upon one occasion it was endeavoured to get up a "want of confidence" affair, when anything that could be scraped together, in the shape of an old grievance, or through the want of integrity in some official, was brought forward, and not only were those attacked, whose conduct might have deserved censure, but also others in the same department were sneeringly spoken of, in such terms that perfectly disgusted even some, who felt, in a manner, bound to support the motion, from having assisted in bringing it forward; and it was reported one resigned his seat in the House in consequence, but this I am inclined to doubt. I need hardly say the motion was thrown out, and this proceeding can only have the effect of raising Mr. La Trobe and the Government in the estimation of all right minded people.

The "Organ of the public, the Melbourne Argus" states that the salary of his Excellency has not been raised on *his own* account, but only in the hopes of

Digitized by Google

getting rid of him; if such is the case, may I ask, why did they not vote a salary of £5000 per annum to his *successor*, and keep him upon his £2000? No! they are well aware that the extremely arduous duties of the Lieutenant Governor, the extravagant price of everything, and by allowing him no house, or any compensation, that he is not over requited for his services. Good, indeed, must be the man that has not his fault or foibles; but, I believe, had the Angel Gabriel come down to rule the Colony of Victoria, during the last eighteen months, he would have been found fault with.

The following extracts from a Melbourne Paper relative to the Statistics, &c. will give the latest information respecting the colony:—

"THE GOLD.

"The statistical table drawn up by Mr. Westgarth exhibits as accurately as possible the produce of the Victoria mines up to the end of last year. It will be seen that the total represents the astonishing amount of FOUR MILLIONS EIGHT HUNDRED AND NINETY THOUSAND OUNCES. Our own calculations made it something lower, but they were founded upon less carefully collected data, and we have no hesitation in expressing our belief in the superior accuracy of Mr. Westgarth's estimate. Since the commencement of this year the quantities brought down by escort have been as under:—

Digitized by Google

BY PRIVATE ESCORT.

		Ounces.
January 7	From Mount Alexander ..	32,060
„ 14	Do. ..	26,115
„ 21	Do. ..	18,772
„ 28	Do. ..	20,204
February 4	Do. ..	23,747
	Total ..	114,928

RECAPITULATION.

	Ounces.
Estimated produce to 31st December, 1852 .	4,890,926
Do. from 1st January to 5th February, 1853	275,308
Grand total, .	5,166,234

Which at 75s. per ounce, is equal to £19,373,377

"The produce for the present year shews that there is not yet any reason to apprehend a sudden failure in the yield of gold; but even if the amount were less than it is, there are still abundant evidences of the inexhaustible character of our mines. Of these the most remarkable is the fact that within the last few days three unparalleled masses of gold have been brought to light,—such as, perhaps, the world has never seen before. They were found in a spot never much frequented hitherto, and there are reports of numerous smaller lumps having been found in the same locality. The largest of these three great lumps weighs a hundred and thirty-four pounds and a half, of which upwards of *a hundred and twenty pounds* are pure gold. The other two lumps weigh 93 lbs. 2 oz. 5 dwt. and 83 lbs. 9 oz. 5 dwt. respectively, only a very small proportion being quartz. They are superb specimens of gold and quartz interblended.

Digitized by Google

The largest weighs many pounds more than the famous "Kerr hundredweight" of New South Wales, and has the additional advantage of being in one solid lump. The fortunate finders are taking it to England in the Sarah Sands for exhibition.*

"The locality where these splendid masses have been found, is called the Canadian Gully, and is a branch of the Ballarat diggings. These diggings were the first opened up in Victoria, and attracted a large number of people; but they were almost wholly deserted when the superior richness of the Mount Alexander diggings was discovered. They have lately risen again into favor, however, and there is no doubt that tens of thousands will now flock there, and explore them more thoroughly. The difference between the two localities seems to be that at Mount Alexander the gold is finer and more equally diffused, while at Ballarat it is in larger lumps and occurs less frequently. A similar difference has been observed between the Ophir and Turon diggings, in New South Wales. The difference would seem to indicate the existence of an original matrix or fountain head of the gold deposits, to which Ballarat probably lies nearer than Mount Alexander. Our scientific men can help us but little in the solution of that problem; but there is no saying what continuous exploration may reveal. There really seems no antecedent improbability of the existence of some such original gold-bed.

* The 134 lbs. lump belonging to Mr. Green and party, is now to be seen in Leicester Square.

Digitized by Google

"The price of gold in Melbourne has gradually risen to £3 16*s.* an ounce, and it is likely to continue rising till it reaches the mint price. The abundance of specie, the competition in the trade, and the raising of the rate of exchange by the banks, have increased the price, and almost annihilated the profits derivable from exporting gold; yet the number of brokers is very considerable, and the dubiousness attaching to the transactions of many of them is proportionately increased.

"The Sydney people have organized a private escort to the Victoria diggings, with the design of drawing some of our gold in their direction. The scheme is not at all feasible, and it appears likely that it will fail. Our neighbours may well be satisfied with their own diggings and the large quantities of our gold which—as Mr. Westgarth's table shows—find their way to the Sydney market in the regular way of trade.

"OUR SOCIAL CONDITION.

"Socially, our condition is much about the same as at the date of our previous summary. Yet there is a great deal of interest in watching our singular progress day by day. Ten thousand souls were added to our population last month. Houses are still unobtainable, rents extravagantly high, social discomforts very numerous, and crime prevalent. The social aspect, as it strikes a person newly arrived, must be confessed to be far from attractive.

"Hence, it is not uncommon for such persons to feel an indignant conviction of having been imposed

Digitized by Google

upon when told of the wealth and comfort to be gained here. We constantly receive letters from new-comers, complaining of having been deceived by misrepresentations, and even charging us as parties to the deception. The truth is, it is the ignorance, thoughtlessness, or the impatience of emigrants, that are really the causes of discontent and failure. Men must accommodate themselves to the inevitable circumstances of the place when they come here. They must help themselves. They must work. Instead of complaining of the difficulties and discomforts that meet them upon landing, they must quietly endure them, and bravely struggle through them. There is room for every man who will and can work. In a land where gold can be picked up in large masses, where destitution is impossible for any person with ever so small a share of energy, it is ridiculous for people to be grumbling about hardships and privations. Once for all, we advise no person to come to Victoria who is not prepared both to work hard and to suffer some inconveniences.

"The disposition to supply the pressing wants of house accommodation to some extent, has increased during the past month. Nothing but the scarcity and consequent dearness of building materials, and the want of adequate labour, prevents the immediate undertaking of a vast amount of building in the city and suburbs. Beyond the city boundaries, and even within them, the overflowing population finds shelter in small iron and wooden buildings and

Digitized by Google

tents. Rents in the business parts of the city are still rising; and some lots of town property fetch prices as high as similar properties would bring in any of the first commercial towns in England.

The moral condition of the colony is still sufficiently gloomy, notwithstanding the expensive body of police and military, and the self congratulations of the Executive upon our peaceable state. The criminal calendar for the present month shows a list of 140 prisoners for trial in Melbourne, although a separate Court has been established at Mount Alexander. The principal crime is robbery, generally with violence; but murders of peculiar atrocity are shockingly frequent. The Act for preventing the emigration of Van Diemen's Land convicts, however, has been enforced in some instances lately, and its salutary severity has struck terror into that depraved class. We look for decrease of crime from this circumstance, as the criminal part of the population is almost wholly composed of escaped convicts from the neighbouring island.

"The legislature has very wisely refused to sanction the sale of spirits at the diggings, rightly judging that increased crime would be the certain result of permitting it. The diggers are almost of necessity a peaceably disposed body, if they are not provoked to violence; but upon occasions they can exhibit a spirit of retaliation. At the Ovens the other day, a constable accidentally shot a man; the populace supposed the act was intentional: they gathered in great force, and were very nearly lynching some of

Digitized by Google

the constables. It is creditable to the diggers that they have always repressed the tendency to lynch-law, although they have more than once been sorely tempted to adopt that wild system of summary justice."

"MINUTE ON THE PROGRESS AND COMMERCE OF VICTORIA.

"Drawn up for, and submitted to, the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, by W. Westgarth, Esq.

"A Meeting of the Committee of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce was held yesterday, at which the following paper was read by William Westgarth, Esq. M.L.C. late Chairman of the Chamber :—

"Prior to the discovery of the Gold-fields in the year 1851, Victoria, at that time a district of the colony of New South Wales, had been already characterised by a degree of progress unexampled in the history of British colonisation. The natural adaptation of the country for the production of valuable export produce afforded to the colonists rare facilities of progress even from the earliest stages. Taking the year 1844, a step just midway in the entire interval of Victoria's history, we find the province to be then exporting an annual colonial produce equal in value to a quarter of a million sterling. In the year 1850, fifteen years from the time of the first settlement, this annual export had increased to upwards of one million.

This produce, which, in both instances, consisted al-

Digitized by Google

most entirely of fine wool, was raised from the natural pasturage of the colony at a comparatively small expense of time and labour. A population averaging, for 1850, 70,000 colonists, thus commanded, from such prompt and facile sources, a proportion of external commerce equally rare and beneficial. The young community, thus enabled to help itself liberally to the choice productions of other countries, most suited to its wants, occupied a position in regard to business and the general amenities of life usually attainable, in past colonising experience, only after a long interval of comparative poverty and privation.

"But this rate of progress, satisfactory as it appeared to us at the time, has been far outstripped since the discovery of the Gold-fields. Within twelve months, the population of the colony has been more than doubled. The other items of material progress exhibit even more surprising results. The public revenues, for example, within the same interval of time, have been increased more than fourfold; and the amount of the export of colonial produce has advanced from £1,400,000 in 1851, to nearly *seven and a half* millions for the year 1852. A calculation, to which we shall presently advert, will exhibit even this latter amount, namely, the export as officially recorded for 1852, as being far below the actual truth, and will give already to our young colony the position of exporting annually the largest amount of produce of any of the British dependencies.

Digitized by Google

"In order to illustrate fully this interesting progress, let us first take a view, year by year, of the earlier colonising results, as indicated by the official records of the import and export trade. The following table comprises these returns from the latter part of 1836, at which time the Customs establishment was first formed in the district, to the year 1850 inclusive, being the year preceding that in which the gold discoveries took place.

"It may be remarked, with regard to these returns, that in consequence of the Port of Sydney, between which and the Port Philip District there always existed a very considerable business, being within one and the same colony, the proportion of the imports and exports of the province, received or sent *vid* that quarter, are not included in the returns. This remark applies more particularly to the earlier years, in which, therefore, the trade of the young settlement appears somewhat shorn of its due proportions.

Imports, Exports, and Population of Victoria, from commencement to 1850:—

	1838.	1850.
Imports	71,000	745,000
Exports	21,000	1,042,000
Total of External Trade .	92,000	1,787,000
Population Average of Year	5,000	70,000

"Let us now compare the wonderful effects arising from the discovery of the Gold-fields. Extending the comparative illustration over the three past

Digitized by Google

years, we have first, the position of the colony in 1850, the year prior to the gold discoveries; next, the commencing indications of rapid progress in 1851, the year in which these discoveries were effected; and, lastly, the results for 1852, during the whole of which year the mines were worked by considerable numbers of persons. The following tabular statements have been selected from public documents and accounts, as the most suitable illustration of the general progress.

"COLONY OF VICTORIA.

Comparative Summary, 1850—1852:

	1850.	1851.	1852.
Revenue Ordinary	£124,469	180,004*	845,834†
Revenue Crown	136,852	199,820	730,967
Total revenue	261,321	379,824	1,576,801
Imports	744,925	1,056,437	4,043,896
Exports	1,041,796	1,423,909	7,451,549
Shipping inwards. No.	555	669	1657
Shipping inwards. tonnage	108,030	126,411	408,216
Bank deposits, 4th quarter	‡	822,254	4,333,241§
Circulation, ditto		180,058	1,327,311
Coin and Gold		310,724	3,034,538‖
Number of Banks	2	3	5
Valuation of Melbourne (annual value)	£154,063	174,723	638,000
Population, 31 Dec.	75,000	95,000	200,000

* Includes £24,404 of Gold Revenue.

† Includes £438,845 of Gold Revenue.

‡ There are no Bank returns for Victoria, as distinct from New South Wales, prior to 1st July, 1851.

§ Of this amount, nearly £700,000 is deposited by the Government. The Banks give no interest on any deposits.

‖ Of this amount, £1,120,420 consists of gold dust, estimated either at cost or valuation.

Digitized by Google

"We shall now present several of these and other principal departments in their various details, selecting such items as may prove important to the illustration.

"REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

"The following tables comprise several principal heads of account. The advance for 1852, in both receipt and expenditure, is quite enormous. It must be borne in mind, with regard to expenditure, for example, on public works and other colonial requirements, that there were not only great necessities on the part of the Colony, but that money, under the reigning state of things, as compared with past years, was very inefficient in providing for these wants.

"The Customs receipts, on comparing two of the following Tables, exhibit a difference in amount, the first being the receipts at the Treasury, and the other those at the Customs. The Treasury returns, being for a period of one month behind those of the Customs, exhibit the smaller amount. In the rapid progression of last year, this circumstance has made a difference of nearly £23,000.

"Comparative view of the amount of some of the principal items of Public Revenue, for the years 1850, 1851, 1852:—

	1850.	1851.	1852.
Customs	77,985	106,092	319,032
Postage	6,629	8,676	12,454
Auction Duty . . .	2,252	1,642	6,806
Fines, &c. (chiefly for offences) . . .	676	947	16,067
Land Sales	123,392	174,275	703,358

Digitized by Google

"Comparative view of some of the principal items of the Estimates of Public Expenditure, as voted by the Colonial Legislature, in the years 1850, 1851, 1852, for the service of the following years respectively, namely, for—

	1851.	1852.	1853.
Post Office Department	£11,165	£17,362	£64,622
Ports and Harbours .	4,198	10,737	42,580
Public Works . . .	32,697	51,153	719,924
Police	23,942	34,953	317,579
Gaols	6,604	10,761	94,549
Administration of Justice	7,094	10,535	43,230
Education	5,906	10,248	79,000

"Comparative amount of Revenue, as received by the Customs, for the years 1851 and 1852:—

"1851, £110,617; 1852, £341,825—increase, £231,208.

"*The New Tariff.*—Before proceeding to the subject of Import and Export commerce, some notice is due to the newly imposed tariff of this Colony, which came into operation on 13th August last. A spirit of tariff reform seems to have agitated all these Colonies towards the end of 1851, consequent, no doubt, to some extent, upon the constitutional changes introduced in that year for all the Australias by the Imperial Government.

"The tariffs in this and the adjacent colonies, which preceded those now in operation, were all founded more or less upon the old 'protective' model. British and Colonial spirits were admitted at one rate of duty, and foreign spirits at another.

Digitized by Google

The produce of the United Kingdom generally was exempted from duty, while foreign goods paid an *ad valorem* rate of 10 or 15 per cent, a duty which, by the reading of the Act, was applicable in each colony to the produce of the others. Intercolonial commerce was thus restricted, and small duties were imposed on a large number of articles, producing in most cases but little revenue, as compared with the expense of collection, the restrictions to commerce, and the inconvenience to the public.

"The Victoria Tariff abolishes both the differential system and the whole of the smaller duties, freeing the dutiable list from all excepting five different articles of large and general consumption. These articles are spirits, wines, tobacco, tea, and coffee, and in each instance the duty is a fixed rate, as preferable to the *ad valorem* system.

"The New South Wales Tariff has reduced and simplified the list of dutiable articles, but still retains in favour of British, Colonial, and Home made spirits, the differential system of duty. The same remarks apply to Van Diemen's Land, save that the differential rate is hostile only to brandy. In South Australia the differential system has been abandoned, but the tariff still comprises a formidable array of duties, small and great, upon every article of customary import, levied by a mixed system of *ad valorem* and fixed rates.

"Some steps have also been taken in the different colonies, towards the abolition of various port dues. In Victoria, the only charges now affecting ship-

Digitized by Google

ping, are a moderate rate of pilotage, the Act abolishing the various dues and wharfage rates having come into operation on 1st February, instant. In New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, the wharfage and light dues are additionally in operation. South Australia, on the other hand, has restored these various dues, after they had been for some period abolished.

"IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

"Comparative return of the value of Imports into and Exports from the Colony of Victoria, for the years 1850, 1851, and 1852 :—

"IMPORTS.

Year.	Articles, the Produce and Manufacture of			Total.
	The United King.	Other British Dom.	Foreign States.	
1852	2,013,614	1,028,297	1,027,831	4,069,742
1851	690,661	190,757	174,919	1,056,437
1850	517,035	102,138	125,752	744,925

"EXPORTS.

Year.	Articles, the Produce or Manufacture of				Total.
	Victoria.	United King.	Other B. Dom.	Foreign States.	
1852	7,329,930	47,827	18,902	54,890	7,451,549
1851	1,382,267	29,533	2,107	9,002	1,422,909
1850	1,022,064	12,945	195	6,592	1,041,796

Digitized by Google

"Comparative view of the principal articles of import (quantity or value) into the Colony of Victoria, for the years 1850, 1851, and 1852:—

Description.	1852.	1851.	1850.
Apparel and slops value	£149,566	£66,063	£42,086
Beer and ale . . galls.	822,889	641,850	381,150
Cottons . . . value	161,492	72,448	50,924
Flour and breads cwts.	461,009	66,300	14,360
Haberdashery . value	220,123	73,943	63,350
Hardware and iron-mongery . . value	137,805	71,356	43,908
Iron and steel . tons	1,492	1,293	2,310
Spirits . . . . galls.	811,424	221,215	296,277
Sugar . . . . tons	7,841	3,419	3,101
Tea . . . . . lbs.	2,157,792	864,509	722,824
Tobacco, cigars, and snuff . . lbs.	1,315,128	450,240	288,100
Timber . . . . value	134,702	35,571	35,889
Wine . . . . galls.	408,376	62,070	78,720
Total imports . value	4,069,742	1,056,437	744,925

"Comparative view of the principal articles of Export, in quantity of produce, from the Colony of Victoria, for the years 1850, 1851, and 1852:—

Article.	1852.	1851.	1850.
Beef . . tons	397	1,391	975
Cattle . . num.	4,625	6,291	5,287
Sheep . . num.	49,621	69,224	57,422
Tallow . tons	1,991	4,223	4,489
Wool . . lbs.	20,247,453	16,345,468	18,091,207
Gold . . oz.	4,974,975	145,146	*nil.*

Digitized by Google

"Referring to the produce of wool for last year, as indicated by the preceding table, it will be seen that the quantity for 1852 has considerably exceeded that of any previous year. I would, however, recall the circumstance alluded to in my address to the Chamber in April last, that the lateness of the shipping season, consequent upon the derangement of the labour-market, had thrown a proportion of the wool usually shipped prior to 31st December, into the following year. The large quantity for 1852 is therefore partly the correction of this incident. It is due, also, in some measure to the shipment of a considerable portion of wool in the grease.

"The rapid increase in the production of wool which characterised this colony up to the year 1851, has now ceased; but it is satisfactory to ascertain that as yet the export has not begun to decrease; some allowance for the extra weight of shipments of unwashed wool, is fully set off by a consideration of the lateness of the present season. The future prospect, however, as regards our wool production, is less satisfactory, from the immense increase in the consumption of sheep as food, and the fact already evident, that the live stock of the colony must ere long prove quite inadequate to meet the want of the daily increasing population.

Digitized by Google

"GENERAL SUMMARY.

"Of the produce of the Gold fields of Victoria, from commencement in August, 1851, to 31st December, 1852.

	Ascertained.	Estimated.	Total.
Exported, per official return	2,120,121	..	
Ditto, overland to Adelaide	228,533	..	2,348,654
Unrecorded Export; viz., to—			
New South Wales	364,913	465,000	829,913
Van Diemen's Land	177,680	67,000	244,680
South Australia ..	327,913	20,000	347,913
England, India, &c.	..	50,000	50,000
Total exported .	3,219,160	602,000	3,821,160
On hand in the colony	709,766	360,000	1,069,766
Total quantity produced	3,928,926	962,000	4,890,926
Proportion of gold produced in 1851	145,146	200,000	345,146
Ditto in 1852	3,783,780	762,000	4,545,780

"From this estimate therefore, that is probably materially incorrect in any one particular, and where errors may have a compensating operation, we have a quantity of gold amounting to nearly five millions of ounces, the whole of which, excepting some fractional portion, has been raised from the soil of this colony within the period of sixteen months. This quantity, namely, in exact figures,

Digitized by Google

4,890,926 ounces, gives us, by Troy weight, 407,577 pounds, or 203¾ tons weight of gold.

"Of this proportion, I have estimated that only about the one-fourteenth part was raised during the year 1851, leaving 4,548,780 ounces as the produce of 1852. If we value this latter produce at the rate of 75*s.* per ounce, a rate which is to-day lower than the current market price, the result in round numbers is the amount of seventeen millions sterling, as the value of one year's produce of the gold of this colony.

"From some late statistical information with regard to California, accounts we are now accustomed to regard as the overshadowing gold-field of the world, I perceive that the official export of gold is stated at five millions of dollars, or about one million sterling per month, and that according to an estimate of the local press, there may be an additional unrecorded quantity amounting to one fourth more; making in toto for one year, a produce of gold to California of the value of fifteen millions sterling. The gold produce of California is probably still increasing, as well as that of Victoria; but, considering the initiatory circumstances of the gold-fields of this colony, it seems not unreasonable to estimate that the produce of Victoria for the current year, without reference to the gold raised in the adjacent colonies, will at least equal and perhaps somewhat exceed that of California.

Digitized by Google

"To continue a comparison of such interest and importance, let us now add to the value of the gold, that of the remaining articles of the export produce of the colony for the past year, amounting to one and a half million sterling. The total value is thus estimated to be eighteen and a half millions sterling, an amount very considerably exceeding that of the export produce of any other British colony, not excepting even the greatest of the magnificent Presidencies of India, and amounting to one-fourth of the annual value of the whole export produce of the Parent State.

"POPULATION.

"From a list furnished to me by Mr. Khull, it would appear that the excess of arrivals over departures for the past year has averaged more than fifteen hundred persons weekly, 104,683 having arrived, and 27,022 having left the colony, leaving a net increase of 77,661.

"The census of March, 1851, gave the population of Victoria as over 77,000. To the recorded number of arrivals must be added a large proportion of unrecorded, who arrived in the overcrowded vessels from adjacent colonies. Some overland immigration also took place, chiefly from South Australia, to the gold fields. Adding the increase by excess of births over deaths, the estimate of 200,000 colonists, as at 31st December last, may be deemed to be within the

Digitized by Google

actual number. The following is an estimate of the distribution of this population:—

Melbourne and suburbs	70,000
Geelong and suburbs	20,000
Other towns and villages	12,000
Other settled population (pastoral and agricultural)	25,000
On the mines	73,000
Total . .	200,000

"With all these elements of material progress and prosperity, the Colony is not without its drawbacks. Prosperity itself, the tumultuous inroad of wealth has unsettled the accustomed relations of society. In a still greater degree has this proved the result, from the mode of acquiring this new wealth. Without the usual necessity for capital, for skill, and training, for the general guidance of mind and education, immense property has been acquired by mere rude labour, and powers of physical endurance, and by parties for the most part unused to such wealth, and unprepared, in many instances, to avail themselves of its benefits. Large numbers of the operative classes have been tempted by the repute of the gold fields to abandon their customary vocations; and the want of artisan labour is everywhere experienced in the attempts to conduct the general improvement of the country, and to construct additional homes for the inpouring torrent of population.

"Some of these evils are of a permanent character; most, it may be hoped, are only temporary,—so far, at least, as regards the more prominent of the im

Digitized by Google

pediments to general business, and the discomforts of social life. Much, in regard to the future, must depend upon the continuance, in their present productive form, of the gold fields of this colony.

"All experience seems to confirm the general opinion already formed as to the vast extent of these auriferous deposits. With such accumulations of wealth, easily attainable by all classes; with the abuse of means likely to ensue; with the concurrent temptations to idleness and dissipation, dishonesty, and outrage, and, to crown all, with the fact before us, that thousands of the worst criminals of the empire are still annually let loose upon this gold-producing country by the persistence in a system now utterly vicious and destructive; it is no longer possible to expect in a community so situated, such an orderly and exemplary society as might have been expected under more usual circumstances.

"But, on the other hand, the colony will enjoy many special advantages from the position she is likely, ere long, to assume, as one of the great centres of the commerce of the world. Her greatly enlarged powers of purchasing the choicest produce of other countries, will go far to compensate her society for the disorganised state of her own labour-market. Already in this respect the commerce with the United States of America, which the gold fields have recently brought to our shores, begins to be eminently beneficial in supplying the colony with articles of food, and with innumerable conveniences

Digitized by Google

in general business and domestic life. One of the chief complaints at the present moment, and the occasion of much remediable discomfort, is the inadequate importation of timber, and of most other imported requisites for building purposes;—complaints, however, which, it may be confidently predicted, cannot continue for any length of time.

"To the ample means of this Colony, the markets of the world are open for the purchase of every aid from without that may be made available to develop colonial resources, promote the efficiency of colonial enterprise, and tend to the amelioration of life, and the progress of our society.

"The comparative facilities held out by the circumstances of this Colony to the rising generation of the mother country, must prove a cause of permanent attraction to many thousands of our countrymen, whose annual emigration to the southern hemisphere will tend, by the constantly sustained identity of national character, and freshness of national feeling, to retain by the strongest of bonds the connection of our great nation with the most prosperous aad progressive of her Colonial dependencies."

Australia has not been gifted, like most other continents, with that number of large navigable rivers, or, at all events, capable of being navigated to any considerable distance without impediments; the only one of any consequence is the Murray, into which numerous rivers and creeks, both from

Digitized by Google

New South Wales and Victoria, empty themselves; the Murray runs through an immense district, and finally extends itself into a large lake named Victoria, in the province of South Australia, from which it empties itself into the sea; the navigation of this river has been for some time a matter of great consideration to the Government and people of that colony, and it is with great delight that I have now to mention the ice has at last been broken.

The Overland mail, which has just arrived, brings news from Adelaide to the 14th of April, and the papers mention that the first steamer has commenced plying on the waters of this river; a small one having been launched has ascended the river with a general cargo for the use of the settlers on its banks—the river is known to be capable of being safely navigated as far as the junction of the Darling (*vide* Chart).

The Legislative Council of South Australia voted the sum of £4000, to be equally divided between the first two iron steamers of not less than 40-horse power, and not exceeding two feet draft of water when loaded, that shall successfully navigate the waters of the river Murray from the Goolwa, near Lake Victoria, to the junction of the Darling, computed to be about five hundred and fifty miles—this steamer, I believe, does not come up entirely to what is required; therefore, the £4000 still appears to be open for other adventurers.

Captain Caddell has also built a steamer at Syd-

Digitized by Google

ney, which has been launched, and intends, if possible, to prove that the river can be navigated from *its mouth*—if such should be accomplished the task is completed.

Private letters announce that there are 11,000 bales of wool at different stations on the banks of the Murray unable to be got away, thereby causing a considerable delay before the flock-masters can get their wool to the English market.

The advantage of this water communication to the port of Adelaide will be beyond every thing, and until railways are constructed in Victoria and New South Wales, the whole produce from the banks of the Murray, Murrumbidgee, Darling, and other rivers, must naturally go to the before-mentioned port; for what will the flock-masters care how they get their wool to market, provided they *do* get it, and, as a matter of course, the sooner they can accomplish it the better.

A Commission was appointed by the present Governor, Sir Henry Young, to enquire into, and report upon the sea-mouth of the river and the other ports in Encounter Bay, as well as the navigation of the Murray itself; and his Excellency, towards the end of last year, navigated its waters as far as the Darling, for the purpose of procuring personal information on the matter.

The result of his enquiries, together with that of the Commission he appointed, may be stated as follows:—

1st. The natural sea-mouth of the Murray cannot

Digitized by Google

be entered, owing to the great surf that is constantly breaking on the Encounter Bay coast, and consequently any vessels intended to navigate the river, would have to be constructed on the shores of the Lake Alexandria (Victoria).

2nd. This lake, into which the river empties itself previous to its passage to the sea, is about thirty miles long by ten broad, and from six to eighteen fathoms deep, and fresh water is found about the middle.

3rd. The river preserves an uniform width of about three hundred yards to the junction of the Darling, which latter river is about one hundred yards wide, and the width of the Murray is not materially altered onwards to the junction of the Murrumbidgee and the Lachlan. The soundings that have been made from the Lake to the Darling in the months of September and October, give an average depth of two fathoms, or rather, this may be said to be the shallowest.

The Murray, taking its rise in the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales, drains, with its tributaries, a considerable portion of the pastoral districts of Australia, and is subject, like all the other streams in the country, to annual floods. It begins to rise towards the end of June, and continues rising until the end of January, generally from ten to twelve feet. The average rate of the current is one mile and a half per hour. It may be important here to be observed, in connexion with this rising of the river, that the wool season commences about October,

Digitized by Google

and the shipping is concluded by about the middle of March.

The only impediments that occur, are in the shape of snags or fallen trees, which in some places would have to be removed; but for this, the assistance of the natives could be obtained, and up to the junction of the Darling, they present no serious obstacle. This point being the limit of the province, the river beyond has not been surveyed; but from those who have ascended it so far as the town of Albury (a distance of only three hundred and sixty miles from Sydney,) it has been ascertained, that before steam vessels of the smallest size could navigate it, the snags would have to be removed, though a canoe, drawing eleven inches of water, went the entire distance at a time when the river was lower than has been known within the memory of the "white man;" and to those acquainted with the difficulties that have been overcome in the smaller rivers of America, this navigation of the Upper Murray appears by no means impossible; and up to the point reached by Sir Henry Young, it is observed by him in his memorandum of 25th October, that "there is a channel most amply deep and wide for steamers of a greater draft of water than that of the limits prescribed by the legislation of South Australia."

It having been observed that the sea-mouth of the Murray is unfit for vessels of any description, it is now necessary to explain the mode proposed to be

Digitized by Google

adopted in the shipment or disposal of produce brought down from the interior. From a point in the channel of the Goolwa, which is a stream issuing from the lake, and also one of the mouths of the Murray, it is proposed by the Government to lay down a railroad of seven miles in length to a point in Encounter Bay, where a safe anchorage may, with certain improvements, be effected. The Government have been furnished with the necessary estimates for its construction, as well as for the other works required at Port Elliott, which it is proposed at once to commence, and where, it is stated, vessels for England and other ports can with safety load. This is, of course, the most natural way for the disposal of produce; but in the event of any unforeseen difficulties occurring in the construction of Port Elliott, as a safe harbour for vessels of the size of our ordinary merchantmen, it would be necessary to make a road from Morundee, or some point adjacent thereto, to the city of Adelaide (a distance of about sixty miles), which road would pass through some of the richest districts of South Australia. This plan is by many considered more desirable than taking the produce down the river to Port Elliott, and would not be attended with a large outlay in its construction. So much for the river itself and the circumstances connected with its successful navigation; the next points to be considered are, the resources on its banks, and whether the transport of the produce presents sufficient inducement to enter upon the undertaking.

Digitized by Google

In stating what is the present amount of produce that might be expected to find its way to the river it is right to say, that the plan is eminently one for the development of traffic; it is for opening up the resources of the vast interior of the continent which, without it, must for ever remain dormant. It is with the expectation that a large population will be drawn to the banks of the river, and that the fertile valleys of the Murrumbidgee and the Hume will be brought under cultivation. It is with the belief that, when once the interior is brought within a short time of the capital of South Australia, a very material increase in the trade, exports, and traffic of the country, will speedily take place.

With reference then to the country of the Lower Murray, the Government estimate of the traffic is about 2000 tons annually, made up of ores from the mines,—green, dairy, and other produce. In the neighbourhood of Finniss and Currency Creeks, are considerable tracts of fine land, which a fifty miles cartage through deep sand and over difficult ranges, renders unprofitable except as pasture. It is precisely one of the many districts in the river now valueless from inaccessibility to the markets. To the proprietors of land in Currency Creek, the navigation of the river must be deemed advantageous, tending much to enhance the value of their property.

On either side of the river to the Darling, there are extensive cattle runs, all of which are taken up.

Digitized by Google

On the border of the river are alluvial flats, varying in depths from half a mile to three miles, with abundance of magnificent timber. It cannot but be presumed, that these flats will, as a population is gathered to the river, be reclaimed, and means taken, both to prevent inundation, and supply at the same time the requisite irrigation.

Proceeding up the river from this point, we enter upon the Province of VICTORIA, and the extensive sheep runs of the Lachlan, the lower Darling, and the Murrumbidgee, which in June, 1850, according to the New South Wales statistical and other authentic accounts, were stocked by 1,155,774 sheep, 306,861 horned cattle, 10,093 horses, and 1,872 pigs. There is in Australia, an annual increase of 40 per cent on sheep, and 25 per cent on cattle. According to the Commissioner's Report, the increase by the close of 1852, allowing for sales, &c., will have amounted to, say, 2,500,000 sheep, 500,000 cattle, the former yielding about 3,384 tons wool washed and unwashed; and if a quarter of the annual increase were boiled down, say, 250,000 sheep, averaging 28 lbs. tallow, 3,125 tons; and 31,000 cattle, averaging 154 lbs. tallow, 2,130 tons. Total annual freights, 8,603 tons, independent of hides, skins, and other matters, at present thrown aside on account of the great cost of transport.

For return cargo, it is estimated that not less than 5,000 rations would offer, say:—

Digitized by Google

Flour, at 10 lbs.	per week	. .	per annum,	1,160 tons.
Sugar, 2 lbs.	ditto	. .	ditto,	232 ditto.
Tea, ¼ lb.	ditto	. .	ditto,	29 ditto.
Tobacco, ¼ lb.	ditto	. .	ditto,	29 ditto.
				1,450 ditto.

With at least an equal quantity of slops, iron, paling, and other goods, say, 2,900 tons. Such is the present amount of the produce of the districts immediately bordering on the river, and which it is presumed, would be shipped on the Murray steamers. The produce from those remote districts is at present conveyed to Melbourne and Geelong in bullock drays, travelling about ten miles a day, occupying many weeks in its transit to the Port. The amount of time saved by this plan, must be very considerably in favour of the settler, the cost is at present from 15*s.* to 18*s.* per cwt. for the conveyance of goods. This charge, and the time occupied, are great obstacles to the further development of the resources of the districts, and a bar to country still more remote; and in fact, many stations have been already deserted, in consequence of their distance and expense of transport.

The greatest point required to be considered by Australians is (should Captain Caddell not succeed), which anchorage they must choose for a shipping place for the produce so brought down, whether to have a rail or tramway from Morundee to Adelaide, or whether to convey it all down to Goolwa, and have a tramway from thence to Port Elliott.

Digitized by Google

When once a communication is established with the sea coast, the Murray will present many advantages for a residence. With exhaustless supplies of fish in its rivers, abundance of game on its banks, and running through vast pastoral districts, it would become one of the most eligible parts for location in Australia.

If the wild flax of the Darling be turned to account, a fresh field for labour would at once be opened; its gypsum quarries could be worked then to advantage; its forests will yield an abundance of charcoal; and, with a climate resembling that on the Rhine, the valleys may be turned into vineyards, yielding an abundance of wine; and if the whole chain of the Australian Cordillera where the Murray takes its rise, and the beds of its tributary streams prove themselves so highly auriferous (which there is every reason to expect), it is a problem difficult of solution to suppose what will be the results of peopling the interior.

The steam navigation of the Murray (being the only natural approach into the interior for any extent), I cannot help thinking will be hailed with delight by all who have an interest in, and wish to develope the resources of Australia. Towns cannot help springing up on both sides of the river, and the trade must be immense.

Both in the colony and since my return to England, I have heard the subject of the Murray's navigation greatly discussed; and it was with much

Digitized by Google

pleasure that I met two or three days ago with two gentlemen who are both personally acquainted with the whole district, and through whose indefatigableness, I have no doubt, that ere long we shall be hearing of parties running from Adelaide to the Darling in the same manner as from London to Frankfort.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

Having now endeavoured (as far as a diary and my own recollection can serve) to lay before my readers all that has come to my ears, all that has appeared before my eyes, and all that I have done with my hands, together with my own ideas of what will lead to the future advancement of the various colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia; and to show that I am not singular in my opinion, I will merely mention that a Melbourne paper has been kindly lent to me, of a later date than when I left the colony, wherein it states, that sums amounting to near £700,000 have been sanctioned for public improvements, and that bills relative to the following schemes, previously advocated by me, have just been assented to by the Legislative Council; viz. Gas Company's Bill, Water-work and Sewerage ditto, Geelong and Melbourne Railway ditto, Melbourne and Hobson's Bay (William's Town) ditto ditto; which latter scheme has likewise been taken up by a Company in London, and a scientific naval officer sent out to report upon the best plan of

Digitized by Google

forming a dock, or wharf, from the lighthouse in conjunction with the railway. Of all the projects this I consider the best, and cannot fail to remunerate the parties *when* it comes into operation. The Melbourne, Mount Alexander, and Murray River Railway Company have also got their bill, but I cannot help thinking, if they will take a little time to consider, it will be found more easy and more remunerative to form the one, viâ Kilmore, in the letter Y shape, that I before suggested.

Upon one subject I must again say a few words, addressing myself more particularly to persons about to adopt the Australian Colonies as their future home. Hundreds and thousands have gone, and are going, and will go to these splendid colonies, under the most *mistaken* ideas imaginable, fancying that the very moment they land, there is nothing to be done but just to pick up the gold, and either remain there or return home, independent for life; some consider, also, that on arriving at a new settlement, they are to find fine brick houses, gardens, fruit trees, and everything all ready made, as if it were some paradise; they are under the delusion, that because wages are said to be so enormously high, salaries so great, and there is such a demand for *every* description of persons, that they have nothing to do but to go to the first house, and they will be sure of finding instant employment; house and home for themselves and families, with scarcely *any work* to be done. People going out under such

Digitized by Google

absurd ideas naturally grumble when they find things so different; I have already given illustrations of a few cases.

How different would be the case, if people, that have never been accustomed to hard work, after having thoroughly made up their minds to go, would say to themselves the moment they embark on board a ship, "Now my labours are going to commence, now has the time arrived to see whether I can, by the sweat of my brow and my own industry, raise myself to an independent position; persevere, I must; brave every danger, endure hardships, privations, and give up all ideas of comforts at first, I must; take off my coat, throw away my gloves, and put my shoulder to the wheel, and work to the best of my health and strength, I must; endeavour to make my wife and children abandon the ideas which (before misfortune befel me) I had hoped to realise, and impress on their minds that they will now have to work, I must; people have told me there is plenty of gold, wages are high, salaries enormous, but they do not say whether house rent is high, or what flour is a hundred weight, bread the loaf, beef and mutton a pound, water a cask full, wood per cart load, &c.; those are not mentioned, therefore *I* will be *prepared* for the worst, and hope for the best; if all these things are so good, so much the better, I need never more know what it is to have an anxious mind about myself or family. Many there are who

Digitized by Google

formerly have driven their carriages in the ring in Hyde Park, now going out in consequence of having been reduced through misfortune; these people are not in general entirely destitute, and either by their own means or by the assistance of sympathising friends, do not land entirely destitute; but if such parties do land at Melbourne with large families, without the means of self-support, or without having a friend's house to seek shelter in for a time, most assuredly "they'll starve," unless they can at first *do anything, no matter how menial;* talent is not the thing so much required at the present time, as physical strength; manual labour is more to be appreciated than intellectual labour. Parents and guardians ought well to consider what their sons are capable of doing, before taking them from school or college, if they intend sending them out with only a few pounds in their pockets; it will be all very well if they go to the diggings, and come across such a piece of luck as the clerk from the North Western Railway, and get a hundred weight of gold; but what will be their fate if they have not that luck? Why their relatives can expect to hear no better tidings than of their working on the roads at ten shillings a-day. I must repeat, that I do consider it the greatest piece of cruelty on the part of the people who advise EVERY class of persons to emigrate during these times; that the colonies are in want of certain description of emigrants, no one can venture to deny, such a thing

Digitized by Google

would *be ridiculous*, and it is most adverse to my intentions wishing to discourage emigration, but my object is to prepare people who wish to go, for what they *must* expect at first, and if they feel that their constitutions or former employments will prevent their being able to rough it, my advice is, "*stay where you are*," for they may rest assured, that during these exciting times of gold discovery they will have to undergo considerable privations.

The report of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, so ably drawn up by Mr. Westgarth, part of which has been already given in this book, contains a statement, perhaps unprecedented in the annals of the history of any part of the world, and, clearly indicates that where so vast an amount of trade is doing, there cannot fail of being many opportunities open to capitalists for good investments, either by the purchase or rental of sheep stations, or mercantile pursuits. Large capitalists would laugh were I to offer them advice; but parties possessing between £500 and £5000, and being adepts at business, cannot help making fortunes; to those people I would say, "go by all means," but don't forget taking out a tent to live in, and do not hamper yourselves with chests, boxes, trunks, and portmanteaus full of "all manner of store;" far better is it to leave your measure at home, and have clothes, &c., sent out after you are settled, or even purchase them in the Colony; notwithstanding you should pay a higher price, for the expense of storing is very great, and

Digitized by Google

the chances are everything will be rotten before being required.

In mentioning the system of Female Emigration, under Mr. Sidney Herbert's plan, I do not wish it to be understood that I mean the Colony requires the characters who have been smuggled into the vessels as "distressed needle-women," and taken advantage of that philanthropic mode of emigration; those who have been bad here get worse there, and nameless scenes have occurred in consequence; it is the *system* I desire to advocate: in addition to that description of women, there are numbers of others who desire to emigrate, and would do so if they only knew how to get protection on arrival, and it would be much better for those who are going to turn their attention to a few more useful occupations, besides those of making caps and gaudy dresses; let them learn how to cook, to make a loaf of bread, or how to be housemaids, &c.: ladies now in England have told me that those sort of young women can always get immediate employment, and good wages; but numbers have been sent out who know nothing further than sewing a ribbon on to a cap, or something of that sort, and were perfectly ignorant even of making a bed. Useful, hard-working girls are what the Colony requires, there are plenty of bad ones there already.

Brickmakers, bricklayers, stonemasons, house-carpenters, shepherds, farming-men, and navvies are the men mostly required now, to build houses,

Digitized by Google

make docks, and roads, &c.; these people should all endeavour to get enough calico or duck to make a tent with on the passage out, if they cannot afford to purchase one; and let them, as soon as ever they get on shore, pitch their tent, and take any sort of work they can get at first—never mind whether they get the highest wages; in the course of a month or two they will have gained a little experience, and be able to see their way; should they prefer gold-digging, my hearty good wishes attend them, and hope they may not share the fate that befel

THE UNLUCKY DIGGER AT

THE END.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

LIBRARY OF

AUSTRALIAN TRAVELS, &c.

PUBLISHED BY T. AND W. BOONE,

29, NEW BOND STREET.

In 2 vols. 8vo. with numerous Plates, some coloured,

NARRATIVE OF AN EXPEDITION

INTO

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA,

BY ORDER OF HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT,

DURING THE YEARS 1844, 5, 6,

With Notices of the Colony of South Australia.

BY CAPTAIN CHARLES STURT,

LATE 39TH REGT.

COLONIAL TREASURER, AND

AUTHOR OF "TWO EXPEDITIONS INTO SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA."

The character of the far interior of Australia had long been a most interesting geographical problem, many imagining the centre to be occupied by a large inland sea, others conjecturing that it was an arid desert, which opinion was further strengthened by Mr. Eyre's unsuccessful endeavour to penetrate higher than the 29th degree of latitude in his expedition during the years 1840 and 1. Captain Sturt, so appropriately denominated the "Father of Australian Discovery," in consequence of being the first traveller to explore the rivers Murray, Murrumbidgee, Bogan, and Castlereagh, volunteered to conduct a party into the interior to determine this important question. With the approbation of Lord Stanley, the Colonial Minister, he accordingly started in the year 1844, and, after a series of unparalleled privations, succeeded in reaching the centre of the Continent in a line direct north of Adelaide. The journal of this perilous Expedition gives an account of the remarkable Stony Desert, the bed of Lake Torrens, descriptions of the Natives and their villages, and the discovery of several small rivers, &c.; added to which, his observations and collections on the Natural History have since been arranged by R. Brown, Esq. and J. Gould, Esq. in the form of an Appendix.

"The details of this romantic and perilous Expedition are replete with interest. From the numerous and lengthened expeditions he has undertaken, and the general intelligence and scientific skill he brings to bear upon the question, we know of no recent traveller in Australia whose opinions are entitled to more weight.—The portion of the work which refers to the Colony of South Australia is particularly valuable to intending emigrants."—*Morning Herald.*

Digitized by Google

JOURNALS OF EXPEDITIONS OF DISCOVERY

IN

NORTH-WEST AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA,

DURING THE YEARS 1837, 1838, AND 1839,

Under the Authority of her Majesty's Government.

With Observations on the Agricultural and Commercial Capabilities and Prospects of several newly-explored fertile Regions, including

AUSTRALIND,

and on the Moral and Physical Condition of the Aboriginal Inhabitants, &c. &c.

By GEORGE GREY, Esq., late Captain 83rd Regt.

formerly governor of south australia, now governor of new zealand.

With Two large Maps by J. Arrowsmith, and numerous Illustrations, some coloured, in 2 vols. 8vo.

"It is not with the slightest hope of satisfying curiosity, or to anticipate the interest which the public in general, and geographers especially, always feel in enterprises of this nature, but merely to give such a sketch of the principal features of the expedition as may serve to direct those who are desirous of obtaining information respecting a portion of this remarkable country—hitherto only visited by Tasman, Dampier, Baudin, and King, and never before, we believe, penetrated by an European—to look forward to the detailed journals of the spirited officers who had the conduct of the expedition."
From Geographical Transactions.

A great portion of the country described in this Journal has never before been visited by any European. The Eastern coast of Short's Bay was for the first time seen and explored during the progress of these expeditions.

"We have rarely seen a more interesting book; it is full of splendid description and startling personal adventure; written in a plain, manly, unaffected style."—*Examiner.*

"It is impossible to have perused these highly interesting and important volumes without being inspired with feelings of warm admiration for the indomitable perseverance and heroical self-devotion of their gallant and enterprising author. Setting aside the vastly important results of Captain Grey's several expeditions, it is hardly possible to conceive narratives of more stirring interest than those of which his volumes are for the most part composed."—*United Service Gazette.*

"We have not read such a work of Travels for many years; it unites the interest of a romance with the permanent qualities of an historical and scientific treatise."—*Atlas.*

"We recommend our readers to the volumes of Captain Grey, assuring them they will derive both amusement and instruction from the perusal."—*Times.*

"This is a work deserving high praise. As a book of Travels it is one of the most interesting we remember to have met with."—*Westminster Review.*

"A book which should be in every lending library and book-club."
Englishman's Magazine.

"The contents of these interesting volumes will richly repay an attentive perusal."
Emigration Gazette.

"These narratives are replete with interest, and blend information and amusement in a very happy manner."—*Australian Magazine.*

Digitized by Google

In 1 vol. 8vo. with Plates and Woodcuts,

JOURNAL

OF AN

OVERLAND EXPEDITION IN AUSTRALIA,

FROM

MORETON BAY TO PORT ESSINGTON.

A distance of upwards of 3000 *miles.*

BY DR. LUDWIG LEICHHARDT.

N.B. A large 3 sheet Map of the Route by J. Arrowsmith is published, and to be had separately in a Case, price 9*s*.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"A work of unquestionable merit and utility, and its author's name will justly stand high upon the honourable list of able and enterprising men, whose courage, perseverance, and literary abilities have contributed so largely to our knowledge of the geography and productions of our distant southern colonies."—*Blackwood's Mag.*

"For the courage with which this lengthened and perilous journey was undertaken, the skill with which it was directed, and the perseverance with which it was performed, it is almost unrivalled in the annals of exploring enterprise. It richly deserves attention."—*Britannia.*

"The narrative in which he relates the results of this remarkable journey, and the extraordinary fatigues and privations endured by himself and his fellow travellers, is not merely valuable for its facts, but full of absorbing interest as a journal of perilous adventures."—*Atlas.*

"The volume before us comprises the narrative of one of the most remarkable enterprises ever planned by man's sagacity and executed by man's courage and endurance. To our minds there is in every point of view an inexpressible charm in such a book as this. It not merely narrates to us the opening of a new material world for human enterprise and scientific investigation, but it makes more clearly known to us the wondrous powers and capacities of human nature. We recommend it to our readers as a work scarcely less remarkable for the extraordinary enterprise recorded in it, than for the simplicity and modesty with which it is related."—*Morning Herald.*

"The result of his enterprise was thoroughly successful. It has added not a little to our existing stock of knowledge in the various departments of natural history, and has made discovery in districts before untrodden, of an almost boundless extent of fertile country."—*Examiner.*

"The most striking feature in the expedition is its successful accomplishment, which is of itself sufficient to place Dr. L. in the first rank of travellers. How much Dr. L. has added to geographical discovery can only be felt by an examination of the admirable maps which accompany the volume. These have been deduced on a large scale from the traveller's sketches by Mr. Arrowsmith, and engraved with a distinctness of execution, and a brief fulness of descriptive remark which leave nothing to be desired."
Spectator.

Digitized by Google

Lately published, in 2 *vols.* 8*vo. cloth, with* 8 *Maps and Charts, and* 57 *Illustration*

BY COMMAND OF THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY.

DISCOVERIES IN AUSTRALIA

OF THE

VICTORIA, ADELAIDE, ALBERT, AND FITZROY RIVERS,

AND EXPEDITIONS INTO THE INTERIOR;

DURING THE

VOYAGE OF H.M.S. BEAGLE,

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1837 AND 1843: ALSO

A NARRATIVE OF THE VISITS OF H.M.S. BRITOMART,

COMMANDER OWEN STANLEY, R.N., F.R.S.

TO THE ISLANDS IN THE ARAFURA SEA.

BY CAPT. J. LORT STOKES, R.N.

"The whole narrative is so captivating, that we expect to find the work as much in demand at circulating libraries as at institutions of graver pretensions."—*Colon. Gaz.*

"We have to thank Capt. Stokes for a most valuable work, one that will place his name by the side of Vancouver, Tasman, Dampier, and Cook."—*New Quar. Review.*

"The science of Navigation owes a deep debt to Captain Stokes. The information contained in the present volumes must render them an invaluable companion to any ship performing a voyage to that part of the world."—*Foreign Quarterly Review.*

"Every part of it is full of matter, both for the general and scientific reader. With the acts of throwing the lead, taking angles, &c. lively anecdotes and pleasing ideas are constantly associated, so that we very much doubt whether any reader will lay aside the book, large as it is, without regret. In some parts you have all the breathless excitement of a voyage of discovery, and sail up new rivers, and explore new lands, while elsewhere your thoughts are directed to the tracks of commerce and political speculation. Altogether the work is a charming specimen of nautical literature, written in a pure, flexible, terse, and elegant style, and bespeaks everywhere in the author a mind endued with very high moral and intellectual qualities."—*Fraser's Mag.*

"While these volumes must prove of great value to the maritime profession, to the geographer, and to emigrants, they cannot fail to be perused with interest by readers in general."—*Athenæum.*

"We cannot, in noticing these two ably written and interesting volumes, insist too strongly upon their importance alike to the mariner, the geographer, and the general reader. The author is a man of considerable merit, a shrewd observer of men and things, and who was fitted by nature and inclination to conduct these researches into the vast unknown continent whither he proceeded with enterprise and spirit. These volumes contain a fund of interesting matter, and we warmly recommend this valuable addition to our literary and scientific stores to the attention of the public."
Sentinel.

"The contents of these volumes, rich, varied and full of interest, will be their best recommendation. For scientific accuracy, they will be highly valued by the geographer and navigator, while they will be read for mere amusement by the public at large."
Sunday Times.

Digitized by Google

THE EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO.

By Permission of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Now ready, in 2 vols. 8vo. with numerous Maps, Plates, and Woodcuts,

NARRATIVE

OF THE

SURVEYING VOYAGE OF H.M.S. FLY,

UNDER THE COMMAND OF

CAPTAIN BLACKWOOD, R.N.

IN TORRES STRAIT, NEW GUINEA, AND OTHER ISLANDS IN THE EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO;

TOGETHER

WITH AN EXCURSION INTO THE INTERIOR

OF THE

EASTERN PART OF THE ISLAND OF JAVA,

DURING THE YEARS 1842 TO 1846.

BY J. BEETE JUKES, M. A.

NATURALIST TO THE EXPEDITION.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"We must congratulate Mr. Jukes on the value of his publication. Scientific without being abstruse, and picturesque without being extravagant, he has made his volumes a striking and graceful addition to our knowledge of countries highly interesting in themselves, and assuming hourly importance in the eyes of the people of England."—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

"To transcribe the title-page of this book is sufficient to attract public curiosity towards it—to peruse the book itself is to be rewarded with the knowledge of a mass of information in which complete confidence can be reposed, for, from the first page to the last, it is apparent that the main object with Mr. Jukes is to tell all that he knows and believes to be true, rather than to win favour from his readers by his manner of telling it. There is not a pretty phrase, an exaggeration, nor an invention in the two volumes of Mr. Jukes; all is plain unadorned fact, and because it is so, is deserving, not merely of perusal, but of study. Such are the recommendations of Mr. Jukes' pages to the public, and all who desire to see truth united with novelty will peruse them."—*Morning Herald.*

Lately published in 8vo. pp. 96, with 2 Coloured Maps, price 6*s*.

A SKETCH

OF THE

PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF AUSTRALIA.

BY J. BEETE JUKES, M.A., F.G.S.

LATE NATURALIST TO AND AUTHOR OF "NARRATIVE OF THE SURVEYING VOYAGE OF H.M.S FLY."

"The work is a very acceptable one, and will prove useful both to the scientific enquirer and the emigrant, the descriptions of the physical features as dependent on the geological structure, are briefly but clearly stated."—*Annals of Natural History.*

Digitized by Google

In 2 vols. 8vo. with Maps and numerous Plates,

JOURNALS OF EXPEDITIONS OF DISCOVERY

INTO

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA,

AND

OVERLAND FROM ADELAIDE TO KING GEORGE'S SOUND,

IN THE YEARS 1840–1;

Sent by the Colonists of South Australia,

WITH THE SANCTION AND SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT:

INCLUDING

An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Aborigines, and the state of their relations with Europeans.

BY EDWARD JOHN EYRE,

RESIDENT MAGISTRATE, MURRAY RIVER, NOW LIEUT.-GOVERNOR OF NEW ZEALAND.

*** *The Founder's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society was awarded to Mr. Eyre for the discovery of Lake Torrens, and explorations of far greater extent in Australia than any other traveller, a large portion never having been previously traversed by civilized man.*

"His narrative of what he did and overcame, is more like the stirring stories of Park and Bruce than the tame and bookish diffuseness of modern travellers. Nothing short of a perusal of the volumes can enable our readers to appreciate this book."—*Spectator.*

"We might easily extract much more from Mr. Eyre's volumes of interest to the reader, but our limits circumscribe us. We therefore bid farewell to them, with the recommendation to the public, not to overlook a work which, though it records the failure of a great enterprize, is yet full of matter, which proclaims it of value." *Atlas.*

"Mr. Eyre writes with the plain unaffected earnestness of the best of the old travellers."—*Examiner.*

"An intensely interesting book."—*Tablet.*

"We must now close these interesting volumes, not, however, without expressing our high approval both of the matter they contain, and of the manner of their compilation. We rise from the perusal of them with a feeling similar to that which follows the enjoyment of a pleasant work of fiction."—*Critic.*

Lately published, 8vo. pp. 64, with View of the University of Adelaide, price 2*s.*

THE COLONY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

BY HANDASYDE DUNCAN, M.D.

HEALTH OFFICER AT PORT ADELAIDE.

"I have limited myself to four subjects, which I believe to be most interesting to respectable persons who propose to emigrate. 1st. The climate. 2nd. The mode of investing money. 3rd. The means of educating the young. And 4th. The provision made for the public service of religion."—*Extract from the Preface.*

Digitized by Google

In 1 vol. 8vo. cloth, with large Map by Arrowsmith, and numerous Illustrations,

SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND ITS MINES,

With an Historical Sketch of the Colony, under its several Administrations, to the Period of Captain Grey's Departure.

BY FRANCIS DUTTON.

"The best work which has yet issued from the press, descriptive of the resources and management of this thriving colony."—*Mining Journal.*

"We have here a well-timed book. South Australia and its Mines are now objects of great interest; and Mr. Dutton's plain, unadorned recital, contains just what the intending emigrant, or the mercantile inquirer, will rejoice at having placed within his reach."—*Colonial Gazette.*

Second Edition, in 8vo. with a Map, pp. 101, price 2*s.* 6*d.*

A SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE LATE

DISCOVERIES OF GOLD IN AUSTRALIA,

WITH NOTES OF A VISIT TO THE

GOLD DISTRICTS OF OPHIR AND SOPHALA

ON THE TURON.

BY JOHN ELPHINSTONE ERSKINE,

CAPTAIN, R.N.

In 1 vol. post 8vo. price 5s. 6d.

HINTS FOR AUSTRALIAN EMIGRANTS,

WITH

ENGRAVINGS AND EXPLANATORY DESCRIPTIONS

OF THE WATER RAISING WHEELS,

AND MODES OF IRRIGATING LAND IN SYRIA, EGYPT, SOUTH AMERICA, ETC.

BY PETER CUNNINGHAM,

SURGEON, R.N.

Author of "Two Years in New South Wales," &c.

"The mere name of Mr. Cunningham affords an ample guarantee for the value of any work to which it may be prefixed; and, "to all whom it may concern," we can confidently recommend this remarkably neat little volume as replete with practical information. Its numerous illustrative engravings in wood are executed in a very superior style."—*Naval and Military Gazette, October 23rd,* 1841.

Digitized by Google

In 1 vol. 8vo. Map and Plates, cloth, price 12*s.*

AUSTRALIA,

FROM PORT MACQUARIE TO MORETON BAY,

WITH

Descriptions of the Natives, their Manners and Customs, the Geology, Natural Productions, Fertility, and Resources of that Region.

First explored and surveyed by order of the Colonial Government.

BY CLEMENT HODGKINSON.

"The work before our consideration contains certain details connected with the portion of Australia, described in it, which will prove of first-rate importance to the colonist and emigrant, since they are evidently derived from practical experience. Throughout this unpretending little work we trace great honesty of purpose, and a disposition to state no more than the bare facts as they presented themselves."

New Quarterly Review.

Sanctioned by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Now ready, in 2 vols. 8vo. with large Chart, numerous Plates and Woodcuts,

NARRATIVE OF THE
VOYAGE OF H.M.S. RATTLESNAKE,

COMMANDED BY THE LATE

CAPTAIN OWEN STANLEY, R.N.

DURING THE YEARS 1846-50;

Including Discoveries and Surveys in New Guinea, the Louisiade Archipelago, &c.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

The Account of MR. E. B. KENNEDY'S Expedition for the Exploration of the Cape York Peninsula.

BY JOHN MACGILLIVRAY, F.R.G.S.

NATURALIST TO THE EXPEDITION.

In the Appendix will be found, Descriptions of New Zoophytes, by G. Busk, Esq.; Mollusca, by Professor E. Forbes, F.R.S.; Crustacea, &c. by [illegible]m White, Esq., British Museum, F.L.S.; and Vocabularies, arranged with remarks, by Dr. R. G. Latham.

"The author of this well-written Narrative was attached officially to the expedition as naturalist; and a more able observer or more diligent collector could not have been selected for the duty. The volumes now before us are well illustrated, full of interest, and sure to command the attention they deserve from the public."

Literary Gazette.

"His descriptions have about them the racy freshness of the early navigators; to which he adds philosophical acquirements they did not possess."—*Spectator.*

"Mr. Macgillivray has published one of the best books of travels of its class which has fallen under our notice for many years."—*Examiner.*

"The result of the Voyage has been the publication of by far the most interesting, as well as most instructive, work which has seen the light since the day when peace once more set our navigators at liberty to prosecute the interrupted career of oceanic discovery."—*Atlas.*

"These two volumes are not to be hastily dismissed; being full of matter conveyed in the plain, manly language of one who has something to tell."—*Athenæum.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

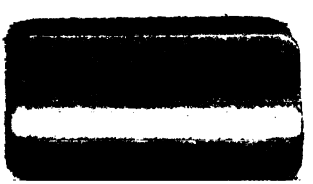
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

YC 48263

M313852



Digitized by Google